

THE
CONSIDERATIONS
OF THE
BISHOP OF BANGOR;
IN A
SERVATIVE
AGAINST THE
PRINCIPLES and PRACTICES
OF THE
NON-JURORS:

O R,

A Modest REVIEW of his Appeal
to the Consciences, and Common
Sense of the Christian Laity.

By JOSEPH SMITH.

IN THE THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N :

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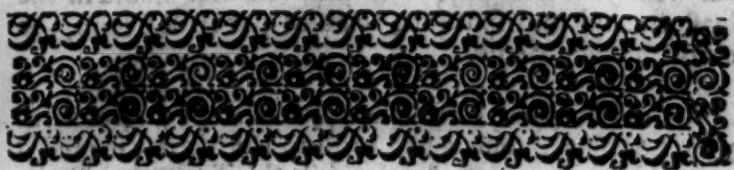
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SOME
CONSIDERATIONS

Humbly Offer'd to the

Lord Bishop of *Bangor*, &c.

My LORD,

NEEDLESS is it to suspend your Lordship with a long Train, of the several Reasons might be given for the Ushering these Papers into your Hands. The Right of *Truth*, and *Religion*, with the Solemn Appeal your Lordship has made to the *Consciences*, and *Common Sense* of the *Christian Laity*, are alone sufficient Apologies. Common Sense, My Lord, is what the Laity themselves may justly pretend to, and therefore, I hope I may modestly venture, with due Deference to your Lordship's Character, and great Abilities, to present to your Lordship's View some things of that kind, which have occur'd to my mean Observation.

THE exact Parallel between *Idiots*, *Lunaticks*, and the *Popish Line*, is so plain and irrefragably Clear, has been turn'd over so often, and oppos'd to every Objection so often, in your Lordship's Thoughts, that it can no longer sure be deem'd a Revolution, but a fixed

and unalterable Principle; and I must so far con-
cur with your Lordship, as to think he that should in the
least pretend to dispute it, cannot put in a Claim, to
even Common Sense.

Thus far then, I am so happy entirely to agree with
your Lordship; but your Lordship having not express'd
your Self so peremptorily assur'd in the Two other *Branches*
of your Discourse, I humbly presume to lay before
your Lordship, such Points as to my present mean Ap-
prehension carry in them some Difficulty, and are not
perhaps so clearly express'd, as your Lordship on a Re-
view your Self may be inclin'd to wish.

I SHALL not, *My Lord*, in this Controversy deter-
mine my self by the unwarrantable Heat of *Non-Jurors*,
whom too quick a Sense of Suffering seems to have pre-
cipitated into some rash and injudicious Expressions; but
humbly present to your Lordship such Thoughts, as at
present Occur to my bare Common Sense, in which I
purpose to address your Lordship, with that becoming
Distance, that your Lordship's rais'd and sacred Chara-
cter in the Church, and personal Endowments necessarily
exact.

IN order to this, then I shall not enter at present
into a particular Disquisition, of the Nature, and Extent
of the particular Deprivation of the *Non-Jurors*, as
declar'd in the Act of Parliament; nor in the least en-
quire how Compatible this is with our Constitution,
ever since the Reformation, because I humbly conceive,
what I would offer to your Lordship, will be sufficiently
included under the Consideration of that general Prin-
ciple; which your Lordship is pleas'd more immediate-
ly to rest on, and inculcate to your Reader, viz. *That*
every Civil Government hath a Right, to every thing ne-
cessary for its own Defense and Preservation. In the
Application of which general Principle, I am so unhap-
py, either to mistake, or else very much to differ from
your Lordship.

FOR though, *My Lord*, I am very ready to own, e-
very Act of *Treason*, committed either by *Ecclesiasticks*,
or

or *Laicks*; in or out of the Exercise of their distinct *Character*, or *Offices*, comes directly under the Sanction of the *Civil Power*; yet I cannot possibly conceive, how the bare Exercise of either the *Episcopal*, or *Priestly-Office* in general, can be included under such a Principle. To be particular, *My Lord*, in those Instances your Lordship is pleas'd to mention. To *preach Rebellion*, and to *pray to God for the Destruction of our rightful Civil Power*, may no doubt be justly punished as *Treason* by the *Civil Power*; but to administer the Sacraments of *Baptism*, and the *Holy Eucharist*, cannot, I humbly conceive, on the Principle your Lordship has laid down be so esteem'd. So that for my Satisfaction, I had rather your Lordship's Syllogism had been thus form'd.

W H A T E V E R is necessary to the Preservation of a Civil Government, or the Hindrance of its Destruction, is included in the Notion of it. But to hinder effectually its profess'd Enemies from administering either the Sacraments of *Baptism*, or the *Lord's Supper*, is absolutely necessary to its Preservation.

T H E R E F O R E, this is included in the very Notion of Civil Government.

I N this View, *My Lord*, though I readily granted your *Major*, yet I could not admit such a Picture of a *Minor*; and the Reason I give is, plainly this, That such Exercises of the *Episcopal*, or *Priestly-Office*, are not at all inconsistent with the Preservation of Civil Government.

Y O U R Lordship will not, I think, contend that the proper Use, and the Abuse of these Offices, are equally Criminal; because that were to confound the eternal Reason, and Distinction of the Nature of Things, and would indeed make all the Clergy obnoxious to the Civil Power; nor can, I humbly conceive, bare *Non-jurancy* (no further than it shews it self in Acts of *Treason* and *Rebellion*) at all vary the Case; it may, I own, justly make the *Civil Power* jealous of their Services, and as justly deprive them of several *Civil Advantages*, and *Encouragements*, which flow alone from its Bounty; but why

why it should be made a Reason to deprive them of their *Orders*, I cannot in the Reason and Equity of the Thing, in the least comprehend.

BUT your Lordship argues their *Principles*, and *Consciences* will lead them to *preach Treason* and *Rebellion*, and therefore entirely Silencing them, is the most effectual Way of securing the State; but, *My Lord*, if the Penalties of Treason and Rebellion will not Silence them, (to which no doubt they are subject in such a Case) it can't be imagin'd; bare Deprivation will be more effectual. All therefore, *My Lord*, as appears reasonable in this Case to me, is, that Crimes should have their proper Punishments, Treason be punish'd as Treason, whoever is guilty of it; and no more Mercy ought to be shown to a Clergy-Man, who is a Traytor, than a Lay-Man. This the Laws of God, the Doctrines of our Church, and the Statute Laws of the Land, allow and encourage; and *Common Sense* must, I think, agree this is not only a more effectual, but a more proper way, of Securing the State, than what your Lordship contends for.

THINK not, *My Lord*, I am of a Nature so Sanguinary to plead for Blood, and Scenes of Slaughter; but I am free to own, that Treason in a Clergy-Man, as your Lordship expresses it, is *made ten times hotter by Religion*; and in spite of all the kind Regard, your Lordship may be tempted to think I have for the Non-jurors; if Treason be the avow'd Result, of the Non-jurors adhering to the *Popish Line*, whenever this Charge is legally made appear against them; such is the Regard I have for the *Publick Good*; such is the just Awe and Reverence I have for a *rightful Civil Power*, that in Spight of the native Softness, and Timorosity of my Temper, I must acknowledge 'tis highly Necessary, 'tis highly Just, they should receive the Punishment of Traytors.

BELIEVE me, *My Lord*, there is nothing in my Principles, no, not in the secret Reccesses of my Soul, that is an Enemy to *Civil Power*. I firmly believe it of *Divine Institution, Ordain'd by God*, not only for the
Good

Good of Society, (as your Lordship seems fond entirely to confine it) but also very often for the Tryal of our *Patience, Faith, and Affiance* in Him; and these, *My Lord*, if well consider'd, are for the Good of Society too, at least are conducive to the eternal Salvation of our Souls. This, *My Lord*, is truly and really my undissembled Faith; but, yet, I believe it still but a *Civil Power*; it may Banish, it may put to Death, or inflict any Civil Punishment on a Person regularly Ordain'd in the Christian Ministry, but it cannot deprive him of his Orders. Those Orders, I mean, he derives from our Lord Jesus Christ alone. Such Orders were those the Apostles exercis'd in their Time, and such the Primitive Bishops of the Christian Church, when their *Office* clash'd with the known Laws of the *Civil Powers*, then in Being. Nor, indeed, at all inconsistent with the welfare of the *Civil Power*, but so then esteem'd, *My Lord*, and condemn'd, and punish'd accordingly. And this Notion, I have not implicitly imbib'd from Dr. *Hicks*, or any other such warm (and as I really think sometimes inconsiderate Writer) but from the Original, and *Divine Patent* of their *Mission*; which all the Power on Earth could not *rightfully disanul*. I have observed your Lordship your self formerly assert, That * Ecclesiastical Persons were appointed by God for one *Purpose*, and *Civil Magistrates* for another; and in those Purposes it has ever been my Opinion, they both derive their Mission from God, and cannot, at least ought not to Clash with each other.

BUT not to neglect any thing your Lordship is pleas'd to oppose to this, nor wrong the Beauty of your manner of Expression, by a mean and imperfect Recital, I shall humbly presume to transcribe your Lordship's Words.

“ Now (says your Lordship) all this is nothing but
 “ playing with Words. For what is this Deprivation,
 “ to which the Civil Power pretends a Right; but, in
 “ truth, and in reality, as much a Civil Punishment,
 “ upon a Civil Account, as any of the Others? Re-
 “ member

* Considerations to the Bishop of EXETER, &c.

" member, that the Supposition here, is allow'd by
 " themselves of a Rightful Civil Power. This Right-
 " ful Civil Power therefore makes a Law, that all Ec-
 " clestiaſtical Perſons, reſuſing to give Security of their
 " Allegiance (which is known to ariſe only from an Ob-
 " ligation they think themſelves under, of zealouſly ad-
 " hering to a contrary Power, and oppoſing this,) ſhall
 " not Exerciſe their Eccleſiaſtical Offices, to the Ruin
 " of this Civil Power. To ſay that the Civil Power
 " may Impriſon, or may Banish them, or the like, but
 " not to do this, is to ſay, That the Civil Power may
 " not chuſe any Punishment but the moſt Extreme : It
 " is to ſay, The Civil Power may Impriſon an Eccleſia-
 " ſtic, totally, but not partially : May Banish an Ec-
 " cleſiaſtic out of the whole Kingdom, but not out of a
 " Part of it. For what indeed, and in Effect, is this
 " particular Deprivation of an Eccleſiaſtic, but a partial
 " Impriſonment, as it is an Hindrance from the actual
 " Exerciſe of his Function ? What is it but a partial Ba-
 " niſhment from his former Station in the Publick Af-
 " ſembles ? The calling this Deprivation a Thouſand
 " Times over, alters not the Caſe at all. All the World
 " knows, that the Sort of it, we are now ſpeaking of,
 " was no other than this ; a Law of the Supreme Civil
 " Power, acting upon a Civil Bottom, for the Preſer-
 " vation of the whole, claiming only the Power of that
 " Preſervation, and of Defence againſt Eccleſiaſtical
 " Perſons, as well as others ; and chuſing this Method,
 " rather than the Extremity of other Methods : Well
 " knowing that a Right to the Greater includes the Leſs.
 " Page 48, 49.

BUT, Why, *My Lord*, muſt this be call'd nothing
 but playing with Words ? Does not the Act that deprives
 them (in your Lordſhips Senſe) reach not only their Per-
 ſons, but their very Office, as Miniſters of the Goſpel ?
 Is it not argu'd by your Lordſhip yourſelf, that the Act
 of Deprivation, extends to their *Spiritualities*, as well
 as *Temporalities*, and that they are thereby depriv'd of
 their *Function as Miniſters*, as well as *Dignities*, as en-
 couraged, and proteſted by the Civil Power ? And whe-
 ther the Act mention'd by your Lordſhip may be ſo very
 extenſive I will not enquire ; but your Lordſhip muſt
 needs

needs know by a subsequent Act, it is made Criminal for any Non-juring Minister to *Baptize a Child*, or Exercise any other Part of the *Sacerdotal Office*. And, what, *My Lord*, can this mean but Deprivation, in the most strict and genuine Sense of the Word? Your Lordship may call this a *Partial Imprisonment*, or *Banishment*; but as long as the Person is at Liberty entirely on one side, and may, if he pleases, live in the same Place he did previous to the Act; and only his Office is struck at by the Act, I cannot imagine what sort of *Deprivation* this can be taken for; but that which deprives the Subject of it, of his whole *Mission as a Minister of Jesus Christ*; and therefore cannot I humbly conceive, without confounding the Sense of Words and Things, be call'd a partial Imprisonment, or any thing like it, but a *real and total Deprivation* of their Ministry, which ought to be founded upon an Ecclesiastical Bottom, if there be any such thing, as a Distinction between Ecclesiastick and Civil.

I KNOW your Lordship argues this Power in the Civil Sword, from the *Greater* to the *Less*, and that it is in its Power to chuse the particular Methods, by which it will punish Delinquents and preserve itself. This, *My Lord*, I entirely agree to, if the Method of Acting in which it proceeds, be of a Civil Nature: It is not doubted in the least, that the Supreme Civil Power has Right to determine, whether a Criminal shall be Hang'd, Banish'd, Imprison'd, &c. But yet, *My Lord*, it seems to me out of the *rightful Power* of that Supreme *Civil Magistrate* acting (as your Lordship expresses it) on a *Civil Bottom*, to destroy or disanul the Office of a Minister of Christ Jesus: For though I am very free to own the Civil Sword, may very justly Chastise the *Man*; yet I hope when it is seriously consider'd, it will not be desir'd by any *Christian Civil Power*, in the least, to meddle with the *Office*.

SOME I am very sensible will think this Distinction, between the *Man*, and his *Office*, too refin'd, and Metaphysical,

taphaical, and would not give a Pin (as they term it) for *Roasting a Parson*, without having the Pleasure of throwing his *Orders*, or *Office* into the same Fire: But you, *My Lord*, have formerly so well distinguish'd between an * *Office* of Divine Institution, and the *Person* that Exercises that Office, that though you allow the one to be Cut to Pieces for the *Good of Society*; yet the other your Lordship yourself allows, to be *Sacred* and *Irresistible*. This then, *My Lord*, is what I directly admit in the Case of the Clergy; their Persons are Obnoxious to the Civil Power, for the same Reasons of State, as the Laity; but their Office being of Divine Institution, can only be taken away by those, who are by the same Divine Institution appointed for that Purpose: And the Result of my whole Meaning is, That both the *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil Power*, are of *Divine Institution*, and by that Institution determin'd in their proper *Bounds*, so that as the *Ecclesiastical Power* must upon no Account, intrude into the Province of the Civil, neither ought the *Civil Power* to wrest what is purely *Ecclesiastical*, or *Spiritual* out of its Hands.

YOU see, *My Lord*, I am very ready to admit every *Degree of Treason* is equally within the Authority of the *Civil Power*: But, *My Lord*, the bare Exercise of the *Christian Priesthood*, is neither *Treason* nor *Rebellion*: 'Tis a Part of its *Office* to bind Obedience on the Conscience, and therefore the Exercise of this Office cannot be either the *Ruin*, or *Trouble*, of any *Civil Power*. If some, who are invested with this Sacred Office, abuse it to the Purposes of *Treason* and *Rebellion*, as it is a personal Action, so let them personally suffer for it. And as they thereby justly bring themselves under a *Civil Sanction*, let them bear, *My LORD*, a *Civil Penalty*; however, let their *Order* still stand untouch'd by *Lay-Hands*, lest it be said in the *Seat of the Scorners*, our Religion is indeed nothing but a Trick of State; and you really now do *sell your Coat to buy a Sword*.

YOUR Lordship, I think, cannot in Reason expect a Lay-Man, should run with you through the perplex'd Mazes

Mazes of Science; the different Dresses your Lordship is pleas'd to give to the *One Syllogism*, or *Topick*, of Self-Defence in the Civil Power, may, I suppose, be justly pass'd over, if the Sense of what they contend for may be taken into one general View: For, I believe, to use your Lordship's own Expression, *Turn it over a Thousand Times; and the Argument can amount to no more than this*, That it is absolutely necessary to the Preservation of the State, that Persons disaffected to it, should be hinder'd by force totally from Preaching, or exercising any other Part of the Sacerdotal Office.

BUT this, *My Lord*, I must humbly insist to be dissatisfied in.

First, BECAUSE it doth not appear to me, to come under the Limits of the Civil Power, to prohibit a Person, regularly Ordain'd a Minister of Christ Jesus, or the Gospel, from Preaching, or any other proper and commission'd Exercise of his Function.

Secondly, BECAUSE the Civil Power may abundantly, and very justly, both preserve itself, and punish Offenders of this Kind many other Ways.

IN the Prosecution of these, I shall not only fully lay before your Lordship my particular Sense of each Particular, but have a proper Opportunity, of yet more regularly considering, what your Lordship has offer'd to the contrary, in the Second Branch of your Lordship's Discourse.

AND, *First*, I humbly conceive, 'tis not rightfully in the Civil Power to prohibit and hinder by force a Minister of Christ Jesus, or the Gospel, &c.

AND this we will consider, and examine under those Topicks your Lordship yourself is pleas'd to lay down.

First, THEN your Lordship is pleas'd to refer to the Constitution of the Church of *England* ever since the Reformation. And here your Lordship observes it to be a particular Branch of our Constitution, " That the
" Right

“ Right of *Exercising, or Executing the Office of a Bishop* in any particular Diocese, arises originally from
 “ the Nomination of the King. Page 33.

THIS, My Lord, I am very free to acknowledge; and that all Bishops may justly on their *Knees* (as your Lordship after asserts they do) *solemnly and devoutly acknowledge, That they had, and held their Bishopricks, and Possessions of the same entirely, as well the Spiritualities as Temporalities thereof, only of the King's Majesty, and of the Imperial Crown of this his Majesty's Realm.* But, My Lord, all this Humility, and Acknowledgment, can, I humbly conceive, amount to no more than this, *viz.* That they hereby freely own, That the *Protection, Licence, and Encouragement* they had to Exercise their *Spiritual Function*, with all the *Endowments, Dignities, and the like annexed thereto*, was an Act of *Free and Royal Bounty*, and as such acknowledg'd by them *on their Knees*: And if, by your Lordship's Saying, *by their Spiritualities, Nothing less can be meant than the Relation between them and the Church, or Christian Clergy, and People of that Diocese, to which the King had nominated them*, is only meant such *Licence, Protection, and Endowments*; all which were *subsequent to their Consecration*, and so as *given by the King*, might be again resum'd by him, when he saw a proper Occasion: This I readily admit (by which your Lordship may see, I give up the Scheme of some of the Modern Nonjurors.) But, My Lord, if by this Acknowledgement, your Lordship would infer them to own they deserv'd their *Episcopal Office, properly so call'd*, and thus distinguish'd; I can't but think your Lordship the only Bishop that ever took the Words in that Sense; because this, My Lord, were not only to give up the *Original and Divine Institution of their Office*, but the very *Doctrine of the Church of England itself*; which expressly, in her Book of Ordination, asserts, *It is evident to all Men, reading Holy Scriptures, and antient Authors, That from the Apostles Times there has been three Orders in the Ministry, BISHOPS, PRIESTS and DEACONS*; which cannot sure be true, were these Orders in her Opinion derived from the Civil Power: And therefore it must be extremely surprizing, My Lord, to see you conclude a Point of this Nature with the following Words.

“ FROM

" FROM hence it follows, that the new-invented General Principle of the Nonjurors, cannot possibly help the Cause of those Bishops; who, by their own solemn Acknowledgment, could not but believe (whatever they thought of the Power then in Possession) that the rightful Civil Power was vested with sufficient Authority to deprive them: Because, whatever they believ'd themselves to hold solely from that Civil Power, they could not but believe, they might be depriv'd of, by the same Civil Power: That is, according to their own solemn Oath, the Spiritualities as well as Temporalities, of their respective Dioceses. To return.

YES, with all my Heart, *My Lord*, I think it is high Time! Let it be peculiar to *Hobbs*, or any Body, but such as your Lordship, to speak such Things as these! The Office of a Bishop solely deriv'd from the Civil Power, and own'd; nay, solemnly sworn to be so by themselves. Such Words as these, now spoke by a Bishop! --- I leave our Enemies to speak the rest with Pleasure!

PARDON me, *My Lord*, but there are in the World such People as *Deists*; Men who think (or at least would have others think so) your Lordship knows full well, all Religion was in the Original a Juggle of the State; and would take more Pleasure in *Parson*, than Fox Hunting, were the World but under their wise Administration: And shall the bare Pleasure, of confounding a Set of People, sour'd by Affliction, almost fond of Confessorship; and however willing, unable, to Hurt! Shall I say, such as these extort Things from your Lordship's Pen, that will be Meat and Drink to the Wits of the Age! No, *My Lord*, *St. Augustin* himself wrote a Book of Recantations.

YOUR Lordship, I think, has not advanc'd any other Medium, with Regard to the Constitution of our Church, than what you are pleas'd to infer from the Recognition made by the Bishops in the Words before presented: And as no other Plea of this Nature has been us'd by your Lordship, permit me to observe, Nothing that looks
this

this Way has offer'd it self to the poor Theory my common Sense has provided. The Reign of King *James II.* has presented something of this Kind; but the *Excesses* of his *Administration* will not, I think, be allow'd by your Lordship to be urg'd as a Precedent. He (as History informs me, for my Age will not write co-temporary) did order Dr. *Compton*, Lord Bishop of *London*, to suspend that, afterwards very Reverend Prelate, Archbishop *Sharp*, for some ungrateful Truths were spoke by him in those sad Times: But as his Application was to his *proper Ordinary*, and his Desire only amounted to *Suspension*, this cannot be made a Parallel to *Total Deprivation*. The Right, *My Lord*, of declining even this peremptory Command, however seem'd insisted; and the Bishop of *London*, by his Practice, prov'd the Determination in *Fact solely* in his own *Jurisdiction*. The Article of our Church, *My Lord*, about Civil Magistrates, seems particularly to ward against a Power of this Nature.

“ WHEREAS (as that expresses it) we attribute to the
 “ Queen's Majesty the chief Government, by which Titles we understand the Minds of some slanderous Folks
 “ to be offended: We give not to our Princes, the Ministering either of God's Word, or the Sacraments; the
 “ which Thing, the Injunctions also lately set forth by
 “ *Elizabeth* our Queen, do most plainly testify. But that
 “ only Prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in holy Scripture, by God
 “ himself; that is, That they should rule all Estates, and
 “ Degrees, committed to their Charge by God, whether
 “ they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal; and restrain with
 “ the Civil Sword, the Stubborn and Evil Doers.”

HERE, *My Lord*, such a Mixture of Ecclesiastical and Civil Power, as your Lordship seems to contend for, is intirely condemn'd by the most *Public* and *Authoritative* Voice of our Church; and a bare Suggestion of this kind is charged by her, as only Calumny, Slander, and design'd by her Enemies to blast her Reputation. She does indeed, allow her Princes a Power to *Punish* or *Restrain all Evil Doers*, whether they be *Ecclesiastical* Persons, or *Laicks*: But then this must only be done with the Civil Sword; which

which surely is not the Case of entire, and *total Deprivation* in a Clergyman.

“ I KNOW, your Lordship observes, That this * *No-*
 “ *tion of Intermixing Ecclesiastical and Civil Power, in*
 “ *Matters not of a Civil Nature, is what seems to you,*
 “ *to have cast a Cloud over so many Understandings.*
 “ And really, *My Lord*, notwithstanding all your Lord-
 ship has afterwards offered to clear this, 'tis still such a
 Cloud to my Understanding, that I can't possibly see
 through it yet. For, *My Lord*, whatever Pretences of
 Religion, a *Fifth Monarchy-Man* may make, for openly
 avowing, or endeavouring to overturn all *Civil Govern-*
ment; it certainly is but a *bare Pretence*, and what Re-
 ligion has no more Reason to encourage, than the Magi-
 strates it threatens or attacks. Or whatever Pretence
 any regularly commissioned Ministers of the Gospel, may
 make, for *Preaching Rebellion*, and *Praying against their*
rightful Civil Power; it's as certain, they are not commis-
 sion'd so to do: And tho' it is indeed the Business of the
Church to censure and punish them, as *Lying*, and *False*
Prophets; yet no Doubt on't, the *State* may inflict such
 Penalties on them, as they were justly obnoxious to, were
 they mere Lay-men. But nothing of this Nature, *My*
Lord, can reach their Office, in *such Use of it* as is not
 at all *Criminal*, or incompatible with the Safety of the
Civil Power: Nor does there appear any Necessity in the
 Civil Power to deprive such a Clergyman, in order to
 its own Security. But this we shall more fully consider
 hereafter.

YOUR Lordship goes on: “ The Exercise of the Epis-
 “ copal Office, is a Matter primarily, of an Ecclesiasti-
 “ cal Nature; but the Exercise of the Episcopal Office,
 “ to the Destruction of a rightful Civil Power, is of a
 “ Civil Nature, &c.

REALLY, *My Lord*, the Case, as here stated by your
 Lordship, seems to me impossible. For such an Exercise
 of the *Episcopal Office*, your Lordship here is pleas'd to
 mention, is as much an *Abuse* of his own *Episcopal Com-*
mission,

mission, as of the *Civil Power*: And, this your Lordship yourself afterwards grants, by mentioning it, as always insisted on by our greatest Divines, that the Christian Religion, consequently the *Mission* of its *Bishops*, had nothing in it inconsistent with a *Rightful Civil Power*: And therefore, Nothing of this Nature can ever result from the *proper Exercise*, but only the *Abuse* of the *Episcopal Office*.

I DON'T greatly like Repetitions, but I hold myself oblig'd to wait on your Lordship. "Supposing the *Civil Power* (as your Lordship goes on) not to have this Right of Deprivation, then it must be true, the Ministers of the Gospel have a Right to be exempt from the *Civil Power*, in Cases which affect it in the tenderest Parts, and which are therefore of a Civil Nature: Or in other Words, have a Right to ruin the *Civil Power*, (for that must be the Consequence) and to set up themselves in its very Place, and make themselves truly, and effectually the *Civil Power*.

My Lord, I can go no farther. To do so, is, I own, a plain confounding two Rights, as distinct as Heaven and Earth, and can only make this short Answer for the *Ecclesiastical Power*; That is, It is not in her *Mission* at all to clash with the *Civil Power*: So when she does not exceed her *Mission*, the *Civil Power* can consequently have neither Right, nor Necessity, to meddle with her.

FORGIVE me, pray, My Lord, some Quickness, when I am in a Circle; because then *common Sense* is apt to be giddy. Thus far it appears to me, we are agreed, the *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil Power* are distinct, *Distinct* (by your Lordship's Suffrage in the Church of England) as *Heaven* and *Earth*. I would now bring this Controversy to a more particular View: and enquire whether the Deprivation, or that sort of Deprivation (which your Lordship pleases) now contended, belongs properly to the *Ecclesiastical* or *Civil Power*.

I MUST own I have observ'd your Lordship wholly as it were confine the Deprivation to a Civil Sense, and that the whole Reason of it is upon a Civil Account, such
as

as *Preaching Rebellion, praying for the Destruction of the Rightful Civil Power*, and the like; and when your Lordship is pleas'd to take it in a more extensive View, you touch it softly, and mention it only as included, or the Consequence of such no doubt very regular proceeding of the Civil Power; but, *My Lord*, what I would humbly propose, is, whether by the *Constitution* of our Church, the *Ministers* of the Gospel may be prohibited by the Civil Power, to *exercise such Parts* of their *Sacerdotal Office*, as are the *Genuine, Divine, and Unalterable*, Effects of it? I would not be mistaken, I say the Question is not whether they may *preach Rebellion, or pray for the Destruction, or Ruin of the rightful Civil Power*; but whether they may *Administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper*, or any such other *necessary and essential Parts* of their *Sacerdotal Office*; and notwithstanding all Prohibition by the State, a *Right* properly so call'd does not belong to them of this kind?

YOUR Lordship is pleas'd in Answer to this to say, viz.

“ I SHALL only add, That they who think thus,
 “ will find hard to prove, that they themselves have a
 “ Right either to blame the Nonjurors for doing what
 “ according to themselves they have a Right to do, or
 “ to joyn with those who have been set up in Opposition
 “ to their Bishops and Clergy, whom they thus acknow-
 “ ledge to have had a Right, to exercise their Offices, e-
 “ ven to the manifest hazard of the Publick; and a Right
 “ not to be controll'd by that Right which the Supreme
 “ Power hath to all Things necessary to its own Defence
 “ and Preservation.

I HAVE already, *My Lord*, in some measure consider'd what your Lordship is pleas'd to call, *The one undoubted and undeniable Principle of Self-Defence*, and shall hereafter have farther Occasion to attend it, but what I would at present observe, is, That this Answer is not so Satisfactory, as might justly be expected, and seems

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only to fright the Querist with what may be infer'd from it by the Nonjurors. *My Lord*, I am very far from approving the Modern Practice of Separation carry'd on, and so warmly (I had almost said foolishly) insisted on by them, because I am very well satisfy'd, even, in their own Principles, it is not at all necessary in the *Laity*, and whatever the Validity of Lay-Deprivation may be, I think the Consideration of the *Peace of the Church*, a sufficient Reason for even the Clergy to *suspend*, at least, the *Exercise* of their *Office*, when they cannot *Exercise* it without a *Breach* of this Kind. This perhaps may not readily pass with them, but it may serve however to suggest something to your Lordship, though such a proper Right should be insisted on as before mention'd. And as to the necessary Consequence of their being totally depriv'd by the Civil Powers justly exerting itself, in the Restraint of their, or any others preaching Rebellion, &c. I must freely own, I can't at present see it, till your Lordship is pleas'd to explain yourself yet farther on that Head.

EASY were it, I believe, *My Lord*, farther, and yet more fully to prove, that the Deprivation of a Clergy-Man, by the Constitution of the Church of *England* is not lodg'd in the Civil Power; and I can't but with some Pleasure observe, that your Lordship does in some Measure, at least, admit it in these Words.

“ AND therefore, (says your Lordship) though it
 “ may be said (I suppose your Lordship means justly said)
 “ that Deprivations upon other Accounts must be per-
 “ form'd by a Spiritual Authority: yet certainly it can-
 “ not be prov'd by any Ecclesiastical Principles this sort
 “ of Deprivation must be so.

IT'S not being, *My Lord*, to be prov'd by any Ecclesiastical Principles, that this Deprivation should come under a Spiritual Sanction, is what I shall leave the Nonjurors to remark on; to me it is sufficient to infer, there can be no such thing as a Regular Deprivation by the
 Constitution

Constitution of the Church of *England*, without the proper Sentence of the Ecclesiastical Power.

PASS we from the particular Constitution of our Church to the Holy Scriptures (which the Order of these Papers leads us next properly to consider, what your Lordship has infer'd from the Nature and Ends of Civil Government coming more properly under the Second Reason-laid down.) I say, pass we to Holy Scripture, and the *Deprivation* your Lordship here contends for in the *Civil Power*, must yet seem more strange. I am very far from insisting, *My Lord*, that the *Gospel* any where *exempts*, any *Persons* from the Sanction of the *Civil Power*; no, undoubtedly *every Soul*, Ecclesiastick or Laick, is commanded to be *subject* to it; but when I consider that we owe all our *Religion* to the *Exercise* of the *Function* of the former, notwithstanding therepeated and most positive *Prohibition* of the *Civil Power*; when I consider that those very Apostles who so particularly press our Obedience to the *Civil Power*, yet thought it their indispensible *Duty* to *exercise* their *Function*, as *Ministers*, maugre *Stripes* as well as *Prohibitions*, against their so doing; it must be surprizing to see your Lordship say such independency of the *Ministers* of the *Gospel* from the *Civil Power*. "Is
" as far from the *Sound* as the Meaning of the *Gospel*." *Page 66.*

'Tis high Time now, *My Lord*, to have done playing with Words; and if your Lordship by *Deprivation*, means only a *Deprivation* from *Civil Privileges*, there is none disputes it with you. *Dr. Hicks* himself, your Lordship *owns*, allows every Thing of that kind that can be contended for. The *Deprivation* therefore in dispute cannot be of this kind, without your Lordship disputes with the Wind; but if *common Sense*, can determine, it must relate to a total *Deprivation* of their Office (which though your Lordship seems all along industriously to avoid speaking out in so many Words, must be your Meaning, if you have any Meaning at all) your Lordship may call *Deprivation* a *Term of Art*, or what else you please; but the plain Sense of it is, what your Lordship in another Place calls, *A taking away, or hindring of the Exercise of that Function, which before they had no Right to exercise.*
This

This is the Sort of Deprivation all must mean, I think, *My Lord*, that mean any thing, and is what I would humbly propose my Doubt to your Lordship concerning the Validity of it.

THE Gospel your Lordship is pleased to mention, as entirely silent in this Particular, as if our Blessed Lord had never mention'd to his Apostles the Opposition their Ministry should meet with from the Civil Power. Did not he tell them he *sent them forth as Sheep in the midst of Wolves*, and continually Lecture them on the Miseries, their steady Exercise of their Ministry would bring upon them in this World? Were they not, notwithstanding all that could be done of this Nature, to *Profelyte and Baptize all Nations*; though, for so doing they were treated, and charg'd, as if they *turn'd the World upside down*? Did they not meet with Reproaches where-ever they came? One while they were *Seditious*, and *Pestilent Fellows*, another Guilty of *Heresie*, Enemies to the Great Goddess *Diana*; every where *desitute*, *afflicted*, *tormented*, yet still oblig'd to continue their *Office*, and in this Sense to *resist* the Civil Power *even unto Death*. The *Apostles*, *My Lord*, were depriv'd often enough by the Civil Power, could that have voided their *Function*; but they were Strangers to the Validity of such a Deprivation.

BUT Example will render this yet more intelligible; when *St. Peter* and *St. John* were conven'd before the Council, for preaching thro' *Jesus the Resurrection from the Dead*; we find after the Council hath order'd them to withdraw, they came to this Resolution, That the Doctrines they had preached should *spread no further among the People*, they determin'd *strictly to prohibit them preaching any more in the Name of Jesus Christ*. Upon this they call'd them in, and (as the Text expresses it self) *commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach in the Name of Jesus*.

THE Apostles to this give their full and peremptory Answer in an expostulatory Manner, *Whether (say they) it be right in the Sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye*, Acts IV. 2, 17, 18, 19.

HERE

HERE, *My Lord*, I think is a plain Instance of the Invalidity of *Lay-Deprivation*; for if it were as your Lordship contends, lodg'd in the *Civil Power*, the Apostles were bound by Virtue of this *Peremptory* and *Authoritative Prohibition* of the *Council*, to have ceas'd for ever after, prosecuting their *Ministry*; and if their *Deprivation* did really commence from this *Sentence* of the *Council*, all the following *Exercise* of their *Ministry* was in the Nature of it *Null* and *Void*, and that *Ministry* which *Christ* had so fully promis'd should continue to the *End of the World*, with his Church, was destroy'd in it's *Infancy*, and the very *Mission* convey'd down to us from the Apostles themselves, was *Void* and *Illegal*, and only an *Honour*, or *Gift*, once lodg'd in the Church, but taken away almost as soon as given.

NOR will the alledging the peculiar and extraordinary *Mission* of the Apostles, any thing considerably vary the Case; because such *Deprivations* of the *Civil Power*, were continually thunder'd against their Successors in the *Ministry*, for several hundred Years after. What their Sentiments were in the Point, the very little of *Christianity*, even, in this Age clearly proves; and 'tis to be hop'd the Faith and Constancy of some, would still bravely continue, were they never so much either betray'd, or openly oppos'd.

I HAD not, *My Lord*, expatiated thus far in a Case so very plain, had not your Lordship so directly pronounc'd the Gospel *entirely silent in this particular*; I am now by the Order of your Lordship's Discourse to consider the Instance your Lordship has propos'd from the *Old Testament*, in proof of *Lay-Deprivation*.

THERE your Lordship observes: "That *Solomon*, upon
 " an Account meerly Civil, relating to his own Right to
 " the Crown, Thrust out *Abiathar* from being *Priest* unto
 " the Lord: And the same *Solomon* put *Zadock* the *Priest*
 " into his Room, 1 Kings 2. 27, 25. That is, *Solomon*
 " depriv'd one of the Exercise of his Function, to which
 " he had been appointed, according to the Institution of
 " God himself: And the same *Solomon* appointed another
 " to

“ to succeed him. What can be a more express Parallel
 “ than this, of the Supreme Civil Power, depriving one
 “ Ecclesiastical Person, and putting in another, upon the
 “ sole Consideration of the Interest of the State? *Page*
 “ 66, 67. Your Lordship adds in another Place, This
 “ Instance of *Solomon* is a plain Instance of Kings having
 “ not only a Power of Imprisoning, Banishing, Executing
 “ and the like, but of Depriving. *Page 71.*

IT would be rather to amuse and perplex, than explain the Difficulties of the Text, to enquire into the wild Conjectures of several Writers hereon. All that seems necessary in the present Controversy, is to enquire whether it were really an Act of Deprivation that is meant by the Words, *Thrusting Abiathar out from being a Priest of the Lord*; or only a Banishment not only from the usual Place of Abode of the High Priest, and an Exclusion from the Civil Privileges, were annex'd to that Office in the *Jewish*, as well as now in the Christian Nations? The latter of these seems to me the most probable Sense of the Passage. For the Twenty-sixth Verse says, *And unto Abiathar the Priest said the King, Get thee to Anathoth unto thine own Fields, for thou art worthy of Death, but I will not at this time put thee to Death, because thou bearest the Ark of the Lord God, before David my Father, and because thou hast been afflicted in all, wherein my Father was afflicted. So Solomon thrust Abiathar out from being a Priest of the Lord.* That is, took away from him those Endowments the Crown always bestow'd on their Persons, and banish'd him his immediate Presence, because he knew him conspiring with *Adonijah*, his elder Brother, against the Crown. This seems to me the meaning of the Passage, and that it was not a Total Deprivation of his Function, because he is expressly mention'd in a following Chapter as one of *Solomon's Priests*. The Words are these, *And Benaiah, Son of Ihoiada, was over the Host: and Zadock and Abiathar were the Priests*; which would not, I humbly think, have been so express'd, were a Total Deprivation of his Function meant, by his being thrust out from being a Priest of the Lord.

BUT should it be admitted this Proceedure of *Solomon* did amount to a Total Deprivation of the Priesthood, or
 Function

Fuſion of Abiathar (which is no where as I can ſee expreſſ'd in any of the *Hiſtory*) yet I cannot but think this *Prince* and his *Father* ſuch *extraordinary Perſons*, and acted often by ſuch an *Immediate* and *Divine Impulſe*, that their *Actions* are not to be advanc'd into a general *Rule*. We ought to conſider in them, the *Prophet* was join'd to the *Prince*; and *Solomon* had ſo many, and particular *Divine Orders* with Relation to the *Temple*; that even this *Action* of his is mention'd not only as the *Puniſhment of Abiathar's Treason*, but alſo that he might fulfil the *Word of the Lord*. For the whole *Verſe* your *Lordſhip* refers to, runs thus; *So Solomon thruſt out Abiathar from being a Priest to the Lord; That he might fulfil the Word of the Lord, which he ſpake concerning the Houſe of Eli in Shilo.* So that this particular *Act of Solomon* is mention'd as immediately under *Divine Direction*; and therefore I humbly conceive it can't be an evident, and direct *Parallel*, as your *Lordſhip* represents it.

It would ill become me, *My Lord*, to be peremptory in any thing your *Lordſhip* is pleas'd to diſpute; but thus much your *Lordſhip* yourſelf on a *Review*, will, I am apt to think, be inclin'd to grant, that it is at leaſt doubtful, whether it really was a *Deprivation*, or no, in the *Senſe* here contend'd; or if it were, 'tis equally the ſame, whether it were an *Act of Solomon's* under *immediate Divine Direction*, either of which muſt exceedingly take from the force of your *Lordſhip's* *Argument*, and render it at leaſt uncertain, whether the *Paſſage* at all concerns the *Queſtion* in debate. For *My Lord*, as to baniſh is allow'd on all ſides an *Act* properly of the *Civil Power*, ſo nothing of that Nature, can be made a proper *Medium* to prove *Deprivation* to be the ſame. And 'tis, I think, *My Lord*, inſiſted by all *Caſuiſts*, That an *Action* under *Immediate* and *Divine Direction*, or when the *Caſe* is ſo much as diſputed to be extraordinary, ought never to be urg'd as a general *Rule*. In all ſuch *Caſes*, I humbly conceive, 'tis an allow'd *Method* to apply to other *Paſſages* of *Holy Writ*, where ſuch *Transactions* are mention'd, and ſee what *Senſe* is there put upon them; and of this kind *Corah*, *Uza*, and *King Saul*, are very diſcouraging *Inſtances*, of the leaſt *Intruſion* on the *Office* of the *Prieſthood*. But as the *Oeconomy* of the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtain Church* may

may be said to differ; it seems best for us to be determin'd by the Practice of the Apostles in this particular, and what that was the Instance of St. Peter and St. John, with many more of the same Nature which might be produc'd, are so clear, and undeniably Plain, that to add any thing further, were entirely trifling and unnecessary.

I WOULD only observe one Thing more to your Lordship (which, tho' I have mention'd it before, may not have reach'd your Notice) And that is, I do not in the least dispute the Civil Powers having a *Right*, on Just Reasons, to *deprive* them of all the Civil Advantages they enjoy under its Administration. And such I esteem the *Diocese*, *Revenues*, *Honours*, &c. of the *Bishops*; which, as they are all subsequent to their Consecration, and so no Parts of their Orders, as they were *given by*, may no doubt be *resum'd again* by the Civil Power. Nay, I am far from contending, that the Civil Power may take away, what your Lordship observes *it never gave, even their very Lives*; and yet I am not satisfy'd it can take away their Orders, so as to make them, in a *proper Sense*, cease to be Bishops. I am very sensible some of our Modern Nonjurors, will think me very large in my Concessions; and seem to have no Notion of a Bishop, without a Diocese and its Revenues: But when I consider the *first*, and *best Bishops* had no such Thing as a fix'd and settled Abode, I can as easily form an *Idea* of a *proper Bishop* without a *Diocese*, or any of its gilded Appendances, as without the *Title of a Lord*, or *Peer of the Realm*; both which I think alone to flow, from the very proper and just Bounty of Princes, since Christianity has made them so happy, as to ascend their Thrones. So that did your Lordship only contend for the Civil Power's taking away those *Privileges*, and consequent Capacities of employing them sometimes to its Damage, I had not given your Lordship this Trouble: But your Lordship's making *Deprivation*, as 'twere to *Commute*, or change Hands for other *proper*, and sometimes, no doubt, *just*, *Civil Penalties*, is what I humbly conceive, *My Lord*, is confounding of two Powers, *as distinct as Heaven and Earth*.

THESE, *My Lord*, are the Reasons chiefly induc'd me thus to Address your Lordship, with regard to the first Branch

Branch of your Lordship's Discourse, in which I have humbly propos'd my Dissent, with a particular Regard to what your Lordship has been pleas'd to offer from the Constitution of our Church, and such Instances, or rather Instance, which your Lordship has been pleas'd to produce from the holy Scripture. But as your Lordship seems more immediately to depend on those Arguments you have drawn from the *Nature*, and *Ends* of Civil Government, I think my self yet further oblig'd to wait on your Lordship, in what you have presented of that kind; which brings me to the second Reason propos'd, viz.

Secondly, BECAUSE the Civil Power may abundantly, and very justly, both preserve itself, and punish Offenders of this kind many other Ways.

THIS, *My Lord*, must appear from the Consideration of their being Nothing in the *regular Exercise*, of either the *Episcopal* or *Priestly Office*, that is inconsistent with the *Security* of the *Civil Power*. This has ever been insisted on by your Lordship's own Suffrage, by our Greatest Divines; and therefore Nothing of that Nature can render it necessary, that there should be such an Interposition. Particulars, *My Lord*, may be useful to make this plain to *Common Sense*; but the very Hint alone is sufficient to your Lordship. The meanest and most superficial Understanding, will readily comprehend, that the bare *Preaching of the Word of God*, and *Administring of the Holy Sacraments* of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, can never be understood to clash with the Interest, or Safety of Civil Government; but in their whole Nature and Tendency, highly contribute to fix and establish it, as much in the *Consciences*, as *Fears* of Mankind. And your Lordship's known Zeal for any thing of this Nature, would not admit you to be of a *Function* that is at all incompatible with it. Indeed, what can the most fertile Malice suggest to be in the Christian Ministry, that will bear so much as the Shadow of such a Pretence? As all its *Ministers* are, or ought to be, *Ambassadors of the Prince of Peace*: A Prince, who when he was on Earth, declared *His Kingdom not of this World*: So it hath always been the just Boast of the Christian Religion, that

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it advanc'd no Principles, but what were as much for the Interest of Civil Society in this World, as the eternal Peace of our Souls in that to come. Nor does the Church, happily planted in these Kingdoms, less enforce these Truths. Both *Tables* were happily united by the *Church of England*, and with Her, it was never thought a Contradiction, at once to *Fear God and Honour the King*. What then, *My Lord*, can render Deprivation of her Ministers necessary to the Security of the Civil Power? What is it can make it of late so very jealous, of even the *Function* itself? Every Misdemeanour of this kind in them, is as much a basely *Betraying*, and giving up the *Doctrines*, they are oblig'd by their *Mission* to inculcate, as the State they wrong thereby; and they are as equally *Apostates* from the one, as *Rebels* to the other.

BESIDES, *My Lord*, it has ever been the peculiar Glory of the Church of *England*, not only to *Teach* the Contrary herself, but to *Condemn* every Tendency of this Nature, whether it came from *Rome*, or *Geneva*. This, *My Lord*, we have been so often told, that none can be insensible of it in this Nation. 'Tis so evidently plain and undeniable, that your Lordship's greatest Adversaries have thought fit themselves to acknowledge it: And therefore *My Lord*, it must seem strange, that your Lordship should *rest on the Necessity of their Deprivation*, on the Account of the *Civil Power*; because in this Case, it is able to condemn them *out of their own Mouth*.

YOUR Lordship, I am sure, need not be told, this is as much condemn'd by the Publick, as Private Voice of our Church. Of this the *Families* of our Church stand as evident Monuments, as the private Compositions of all her *Genuine Clergy*: Most certainly therefore, nothing of this Nature can render the *Clergy* in their *Office* formidable to any *Rightful Civil Power* here in *England*, and must consequently conclude your Lordship mistaken, in the present *Necessity* of their Deprivation, in order to the Security of the Civil Government.

I AM very well aware it will be suggested, that notwithstanding the Truth of all this, yet such is the present Turn of some Clergy-Mens Minds, that they think it a
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Duty to preach against the present Civil Power ; and their *Mistake* in the Application is of equal Importance to the *Civil Government*, as if they were immediately led thereto by their *Mission* ; and therefore the taking away their *Mission* is the least the Civil Power can do, for its own Security.

BUT this, *My Lord*, is what I can by no means concur in ; because the taking away the *Mission*, is not so properly a Punishing of the *Mistake*, as the *Principle* or *Function*, from whence this *Mistake* is falsely concluded ; and the Man who *perverts* or *abuses* his *Function* by this means, is let to escape, while the *Function* itself, thus *perverted*, and *abused*, seems to stand alone the *Criminal*.

I KNOW not how metaphysical such Distinctions as these may be thought by some, but I cannot but think it founded in the Nature and Equity of the Thing ; that only that which *offends*, should be *punish'd*, and the Offence here only lying in the *Mistake*, and not the *Function*, the Penalty ought to be so order'd, as alone to reach the *Mistake*, distinguish'd from the *Function* ; and if they can be so distinguish'd, they ought in Justice and Equity so to be, and consequently there cannot be an *absolute Necessity* to blend them together.

AND this, *My Lord*, will appear the more intelligible, if we descend to such Particulars, which your Lordship is pleas'd to mention in this Controversy. To preach *Rebellion*, or *Pray for the Destruction, or Ruin of the Rightful Civil Power*, will, *My Lord*, I believe be confess'd on all Sides, to be an *Abuse*, or at least a *Mistake*, of the *Ministerial Function* ; and so consequently not to be charged on the *Function* : For otherwise, such a *Mistake* in one *Clergyman*, must equally affect all ; which I think I may be positive, your Lordship won't admit. Therefore in Order to an equitable Proceeding against the Person who makes this *Abuse*, or *Mistake*, of his *Function*, is it not necessary (if practicable) to distinguish this *Abuse* or *Mistake* from his *Function* ; and while the one is punish'd as *wicked* and *pernicious*, the other should be left *untouched*, nay, *commended* and *approv'd* of : I say, *My Lord*, is not this *Equity*, and founded in the Distinctions

tions of *Good* and *Evil*? I am persuaded your Lordship will not deny it.

TO bring this Home then in the Application to the present Case. Cannot this particular *Abuse* or *Mistake* of the Nonjurors, in *Preaching Rebellion*, &c. be punish'd without depriving them totally of the *good* and *innocent Exercise* of their Orders? To say it can't, *My Lord*, is to assert the Civil Power has no other Way to punish a *Clergyman*, but that of *Deprivation*; but that he may have the same *Civil Penalties* inflicted on him as another Man, is allow'd on all Sides; therefore such a Deprivation can be neither right nor necessary.

BUT you, *My Lord*, are pleas'd to think this is binding down the Civil Power to the *extremest Methods*; and therefore you contend for their being deprived by Way of Commutation; for those Penalties, the *Statute Laws* of the Land would inflict on such male Practices.

BUT, *My Lord*, has not the Civil Power a vast Variety of *Civil Penalties*, with which it may make its *Choice*, and either relax or heighten its Rigours, as it sees proper Reason? If the Civil Power does not think fit to *Hang*, or *Banish*, or *Imprison* such an Offender, can it not *Fine*, or barely withdraw several Civil Privileges from him? It will not sure be contended, that the Civil Power can't help itself a thousand Ways, against the Attempts of any *Clergyman*, without depriving him of his Orders; and it must be allow'd, those Ways are a thousand Times more effectual to all the Purposes of Civil Power; consequently the one undoubted, undeniable Principle of Self-Defence, must be uncertain and precarious in the present Application, and appear so even to *common Sense*.

I PROCEED now, *My Lord*, to the Third Branch of your Lordship's Discourse, in which I am free to own, the strange and modern Monopoly some of our Nonjurors have made of all the *Sacerdotal Power*, and *Privileges*, which *Christ* has given to his Church, seems to me as wild and extravagant, as your Lordship has pronounc'd: But yet I can't but think, the Blasphemy and Absurdity your Lordship is pleas'd to charge on such a Claim in the Priesthood

Priesthood in general, is what still admits of some Difficulty. Your Lordship here indeed, seems to express yourself something more loose and uncertain, than in other Parts of your Book: But as what is insisted on, is apply'd to the Christian Priesthood, and the whole Authority there mention'd in it, is rejected, and spoke of with an Air of Contempt, and Disdain, I must own myself yet farther so unhappy, as to dissent from your Lordship. You are pleas'd to say,

“ WHEN they would alarm you (as their Fellow Labourers the *Papists* do) by telling you that you cannot hope for the Favour of God, but by the strictest Communion with their Church; (which is the same true Church of *England*, govern'd by Bishops in a regular Succession) that God himself had hung your Salvation upon such a Nicety, that he dispences none of his Favours, or Graces, but by the Hands of themselves, and their Subordinate Priests; that you cannot be authoritatively Bless'd, or Releas'd from your Sins, but by them who are the regular Priests; that Churches under other Bishops, are Schismatical Conventicles, made up of excommunicated Persons, both Clergy and Laity, out of God's Church, as well as out of his Favour: I say, when such Arguments as these are urged, you need only have recourse, to a general Answer to this whole Heap of Scandal and Defamation, upon the Will of God, the Gospel of Christ, and the Church of *England*, in particular.

“ YOU may tell them securely, that you have not so understood the Nature of God, who is your Governor and judge, that you have not so learn'd Christ, or the Design of his Gospel; or even the Foundation of this Part of his Church, reform'd, and establish'd in *England*. The following Arguments will justify you; which therefore ought frequently to be in the Thoughts of all, who have any Value for the most important Points. God is just, and equal, &c.

INDEED, My Lord, I should not content myself, were there Nothing to be said to either *Papists* or *Nonjurors*. But a general Parangue on the *Justice, Equity, and Goodness*

Goodness of God: For tho' I am very far from disputing any thing that can be said of that Nature; yet I must own *regular Ordination* (for so your Lordship afterwards has express'd it) *authoritative Benediction, Remission*, and the like; are Words, that to me, seem to carry a good old Meaning; and however, I may condemn their extravagant Applications by Papiſts, and of late by Non-jurors; yet ſtill the Words themſelves ſtrike me with Awe and Reverence. It is not, I humbly conceive, at all inconſiſtent with the Notion of God Almighty's being a juſt, equal, and good Being, to ſuppoſe, that when he left the Earth, and *aſcended up on high*, he gave Gifts unto Men; ſome Prophets, ſome Apoſtles, ſome Paſtors, Teachers, &c. And theſe Gifts were ſo peculiar to one Set of Men, more than the reſt, that an Apoſtle ſeems to make it a Thing impoſſible to be poſſeſs'd of any Thing of this Nature, without he were regularly admitted thereto. *How ſhall they preach* (ſays he) *except they be ſent, and how ſhall they hear without a Preacher?* And for this Cauſe, that is, that there might not be wanting a Set of them thus qualify'd, he tells Titus *he left him in Creet, that he might ordain Elders in every City*. And in another Place expreſſly tells us, That the Chriſtian Prieſthood was *an Honour that no Man took of himſelf, but he that is call'd of God, as was Aaron*. Whatever therefore, may be inferr'd by Papiſts, Non-jurors, or the Advocates of *Lay-Baptiſm* from a Regular Ordination, and all its conſequent Parts, I muſt own, I think, it a Principle, as old as the Apoſtles, of Divine Inſtitution, and that none but Perſons ſo qualify'd, can *Authoritatively Bleſs, Abſolve, &c.* and this one would not have expected to be deny'd by any, but one who can make no Pretenſions of this kind himſelf.

NOR did the After-ages of the Church, eſteem this Original Divine Inſtitution of the Miniſtry at all leſs Sacred, and indiſpenſible with Men; notwithstanding, *My Lord*, they believed God to be Juſt, and Equal in all his Ways. The Care that was taken by the Church in all Ages to keep up a Set of Perſons regularly Ordain'd to the Miniſtry, is ſo apparent in all Church Hiſtory, that ſuch Inſtances as *Athanaſius's* Baptizing a Child, when

when a Boy, &c. can only argue what mean Shifts the Contenders for *Lay-Baptism* are put to. As it was ever esteem'd of Divine Institution, so it was accordingly treated with Honour and Respect, and not given up to the Passions and Follies of any. A regular and outward Call to the Ministry was in no Age, *My Lord*, deem'd a Nicety; and though such a Stress may not perhaps be laid on it as to limit the Mercy of God, yet certainly where the Use of it may be had, to reject it, is to reject, even, a Divine Institution; and he that so *despises* the regular Priesthood, *despises* Christ himself, and him that *sent him*; and though I am very far from admitting this Regularity to consist in what the Non-Jurors, of late call a Regular Succession (which through the Personal Frailty of Humane Nature must plunge us in inextricable Difficulties, and is not, indeed, a part of the Original and Divine Institution) yet I cannot but think the Regularity of the Mission itself, is a Matter of considerable Consequence, especially when oppos'd to those who have no Pretence of that kind. Good Nature, and a Desire that all should be saved, may lead us to some kind Expressions towards those, who are not so happy to be possess'd of these Privileges; but all that can possibly be said in such a Case is, People of this kind must be left to the *uncovenanted Mercy of God*, who most certainly is tenacious of his own *Institutions*, especially when he finds them perversely rejected. To tell us, That History leaves us at uncertainty, who are thus regularly Ordain'd, is shocking and unfair: The World has not since the first planting of Christianity been so lost to it ever, as to want a sufficient Number to keep up such an Order of Men; and though particular Incidents may give Birth to doubt in some; yet it has always been abundantly furnish'd to supply the Difficulty. To prove a Fact of this Nature must sure appear needless; 'tis to prove that there has been such Distinctions, as Clergy and Laity, ever since Christianity, wherever it has been preach'd, with abundance of such other Particulars, as carry their own Evidence along with them.

If the Authority of the Church of *England* be of force, she plainly asserts (as has before been observ'd) her Three Orders of the Ministry to have come down to her
from

from the Apostles themselves. The Presbyterians assert the same of their two, tho' they have no just Pretence to either of them; and indeed none but such wild Enthusiasts, as reject those ~~Divine~~ Institutions themselves, in which the Ministry is chiefly employ'd, but what insist on such a Thing, as an outward Regular Ordination.

MY Answer therefore, to either a Papist, or Non-Juror, would not be by slighting, and making light of such a Charge, but by fully insisting that the Priesthood, I joyn, has the same *Species* of Orders with themselves. That this whole Ministry flows from a true *Episcopate*, and though this *Episcopate* may be charg'd by both of them with Usurpation, with regard to some particular Dioceses in which it is fix'd, and that justly too; yet, as long as it appears that they were regularly admitted into the *Episcopate*, every Thing of that Nature is entirely Personal, and so cannot affect their Administrations. This, *My Lord*, is what I were able to say, even, on their own Principles, consequently I destroy their Charge of irregular Ordination, even in the very Root of it; and prove our Ordination so far from being irregular, (I speak as an Ordination) that it is of the very same *Species* with their own; and should every Thing they charge on those who Officiate therein, be never so much admitted; yet, still as by the Doctrine of our Church, and the Nature of their Mission, they do not *Act in their own Name*, but that of *Jesus Christ*; all their Administrations are still the same, as if they were personally the most pure and spotless Men on Earth.

BUT on the contrary, let it be once admitted that the Priesthood of our Publick Assemblies, is Null and Void, and only Usurpation, (as in the Case of our Dissenters) and we may argue indeed from the Mercy of God, but it is very certain we cannot from his *Promises*, our Hopes of Salvation. An Apostate *Julian* may laugh at the Font, as of no Use to the Cleansing of the Soul; but for my Part, I don't love to quarrel with the *stated means* of my Salvation, nor by the freedom of my Thoughts, expound away the Institutions of Heaven. My *Reason* it is true, tells me that God is Just, and Equal, and Good; but my *Bible* tells me further, That except *I be born of Water,*

Water, and of the Holy Ghost ; and except I eat the Flesh of my Saviour, and drink his Blood, I can neither enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, nor have any Life in me. This makes me (as our Church expresses it) believe there are *Two Sacraments generally necessary to Salvation, Baptism and the Lord's Supper* ; and this makes me also desirous of living under a *Regular Priesthood*, because I can much more easily infer my Salvation from the express Promises of God, than the most labour'd Contemplation on his Nature and Attributes. Times of Ignorance indeed God wink'd at ; but to know a Thing to be of Divine Institution, and yet slight and neglect it ; let who will call this Conscience, or Persuasion, it appears to me to be downright Perverseness. *A Man above Ordinances* may appear with tolerable Countenance amidst the Monsters mention'd in my Lord Clarendon's History ; but if our Reason does not, our very Senses one would think, should now rise up against such Principles.

BUT your Lordship is pleas'd to say, We have no Occasion thus to insist on the Regularity of our Priesthood ; and bid us tell those who insist on it, " That we have not such Notions of God, as to think it Consistent with his Nature, to wrap up the most Important of all Points, in Clouds of Obscurity and Uncertainty ; " That in Fact there must have been frequent Interruptions in the Succession of the Christian Clergy ; That the Gospel layeth no Stress on this Matter, but a great deal of Weight upon things of quite another Nature ; " That you imitate our first Reformers, who scorn'd to take their Claim to the Purity of the Gospel from such Topicks ; That you do not put the Cause of the Reformation, and of the Church of *England*, on such ; but upon your own being sincerely persuaded of the Necessity of departing from those, who had departed from God, and destroy'd the whole Design of his Gospel ; " That God and Christ could not but approve of this, and therefore could not but approve of those of the Clergy, who did at first, and have since joyn'd in it ; " That you cannot put either their, or your own Eternal Salvation, upon their Regular Ordination, or unbroken Succession from the Apostles ; because this would be to put upon the Invention of Men, and not the Declara-

"tion of Christ, and indeed, upon what you may be
 "very well assur'd never was. Page 88, 89.

INDEED, *My Lord*, when I consider these Words as spoke of the Christian Priesthood in general, they appear to me so very shocking and perplex'd, that I durst not trust my bare Common Sense in the Construction. However, *My Lord*, the wild and arrogant Monopoly of the whole Priesthood by Papists and Nonjurors to themselves, may be justly deem'd; yet, sure, the Christian Priesthood in general, is not the Invention of Men, but of Divine Institution; nor can it be any Scandal or Reproach to Christianity itself, to assert it to be so; whether your Lordship means the Christian Priesthood in general, or only the Novel Notions of it propagated by Papists and Nonjurors; Your sometimes general Way of Expression, and at others particular Application to their Case, renders exceeding hard to determine; and such is the Deference I have for your Lordship, that I will not pretend to guess, till I see your Lordship, yet, farther explain yourself. But that where-ever there is, or has been a Christian Priesthood, it is, and was of Divine Institution, has, as far as I have been able to learn, been insisted on by all, and most certainly our first Reformers were not ashamed to make such a Claim to the Purity of the Gospel. Our first Reformers, *My Lord*, were Men of Sense, as well as Goodness, and therefore were fully satisfy'd that the *Power*, of *Ordination* was common to the whole *Episcopate*, where-ever lodg'd, consequently, were not frighted with the Noise of their Adversaries against the Regularity of their *Orders*, when they knew they had them from the *Imposition* of such Hands, as were sufficiently impower'd by Jesus Christ to confer them. There was nothing, *My Lord*, pretended against the *Orders* of our first Reformers, but what in those Days was call'd *Heresy*. They once had them, their greatest Enemies must confess; and if they made use of them to the purging the Church from those abominable Corruptions were then crept into it, they made themselves appear the Ministers of Christ Jesus. The Church of *England* was not reform'd by *Lay-Hands*, and could as justly boast of a *Regular Episcopate and Priesthood*, as the Papists themselves. Nor were any of the *Papish Clergy* de-

priv'd

priv'd of their *Mission*, but only of such *Exercises* which were the *Abuse* of it, and destructive both of the *Purity* of the Church, and *Peace* of the State.

THESE, *My Lord*, were the *Principles*, and these the *Practices* of our first Reformers, in which they did not proceed as our Enemies of *Rome* love to call it, on the Freaks of *Enthusiasm*; but on the most solid and irresistible Principles of *Reason*, established by a *sure Word of Prophecy*, and confirm'd by the *Demonstration of the Spirit*. They bravely, and honestly, indeed, rejected the *false Infallibility* of the Church of *Rome*; but, *My Lord*, they were not wanting of the *true Infallibility* of the Scripture. The sacred and unerring Oracles of God, they knew could not deceive them, and supported, and encourag'd, by these, they waded to the Realms of *Eternal Glory*, through the Streams of their honest Blood.

I AM sensible, with Shame and Horror I speak it, 'tis made a sort of Fashion of late, to give up the Certainty, of our Faith, and Principles of our brave Fore-Fathers, in a Compliment to the Ignorance, Impudence, and Weakness of our Modern Enthusiasts and Phanaticks; and Infallibility of late sounds so ill in our *Protestant Ears*, that it must not be bore with, even in the positive Determinations of Scripture itself. Conscience, New Light, and Reason, have resum'd the Chair of Infallibility, and the Holy Scripture's, but a dead Letter with one, and below the Notice of the Man of Parts with the other.

THIS, *My Lord*, speaks not only *Latitude*, but abominable *Licentiousness* in the Age; and while these People are tickl'd with such soft Words as *Persuasions*, *sincere Dictates of Consciences*, &c. and not brought back to the good old Rule of the *Law*, and the *Testimony*, we shall find them encrease upon us. There are several Motives of *Persuasion*, *My Lord*; One is persuaded he *must be Rich*; another, *That a good Post is a good Thing*, &c. and the Experience of the World demonstrates there is no getting such *Persuasion* out of some People. I am far from disputing the Injustice of *judging another*, by such a Rule as *we will not be judg'd by our selves*; but I hope I
may

may insist on the Scripture, as a Rule by which all ought to be judg'd. Our Statutes, our humane Laws, will not be trifled with at this rate, *I believe such an Estate is mine*, and *I am sincerely persuaded* may another cry, *I owe the Plaintiff nothing*: But this won't do, *My Lord*, in *Westminster-Hall*; nor will it hereafter at the Bar of Heaven; God is Just, Equal, Good, and Wise too, and is not to be impos'd on by Pretences. He out of his infinite Goodness has reveal'd himself to Mankind; and whatever may be said of those, who have not been so happy to have read his Will; those who have, can have nothing to offer. *Do this*, says the Blessed Jesus, *in Remembrance of me*. No says the Quaker, *I am not persuaded of that*. *Those shall go away into everlasting Punishment*. No says another, *That savours of Mahometism*. God has appointed a Day in the which he will judge the World. No cries a Third, *If you look for such a Day, you may look while your Eyes drop out*. And all this, *My Lord*, if you will believe them, is *sincere Persuasion*; so that at this rate, a Man might be persuaded out of every Article in his Creed.

PERSUASION therefore in this Case, as well as all others, is to be treated as a Sham and Cheat, and where the Gospel is propos'd, we may conclude with an Apostle, *If it be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, whom the God of this World has blinded their Minds*, &c. This, *My Lord*, seems to me a safer Way of concluding, than by flattering every Villain, who has a Mind to make a Gain of his outward Godliness, with the Pretence of the Honesty of his Intentions, Sincerity of his Persuasion, or any other such modern Method of confounding the Distinctions of Good and Evil.

YOUR Lordship is pleas'd to give two Reasons for resolving all Religion into what you call an *honest or sincere Persuasion*: "That our Church, and every Protestant Church in the World, may not be absolutely condemn'd; and that the equitable Law may appear evident beyond Exception, of not judging others by a Rule, by which we always refuse to be judg'd ourselves". Page 87.

BUT,

BUT, *My Lord*, when the Holy Scripture it self is made the Rule, as the Articles of our Church plainly assert, our Religion is not resolv'd, as your Lordship contends, into a bare *Persuasion*, but properly and strictly, into what that determines; and so cannot be call'd *Judging* by a Rule, we will not be judg'd by our selves; But honestly proposing, and insisting on a Rule receiv'd (or which at least ought to be receiv'd) by all, which sure can't but be deem'd strictly agreeable to the exactest Law of Equity.

THIS, *My Lord*, appears to me highly necessary to be mention'd, That the *Christian Religion in general* might not be concluded, uncertain in its dernier Resort, and subject to *Scepticism*; and that the *Faith* of our own Church in particular, might be resolv'd into the *infallible Certainty* of the Holy Scriptures themselves. Nor will this, I think, be at all contended to be the Sense of our best Divines, in all their Debates with the Church of *Rome*; and however, she has been able to take Advantage of the idle Freaks of our Enthusiasts, and Free-Thinking Scepticks; here has been always their fast Hold, and neither the *Pomp* of pretended Infallibility, the *Rant* of Phariaticism, nor *Impudence* of open Infidelity, could ever make them retreat. *To the Law, and to the Testimony, if a Man speak contrary, he has no Light in him.*

THE Difference, I humbly conceive, between us and the Church of *Rome*, is not whether there be such a Thing as *Infallibility*, but where it is lodg'd? They say, in the Church; We, the Holy Scriptures; which all intelligent Protestants have ever asserted to be so in all its Determinations. But, this I have formerly largely* insist'd on; and shall not therefore trouble your Lordship with the Repetition.

THUS far, *My Lord*, I have humbly propos'd my Thoughts, of what you have been pleas'd to say of the Christian Priesthood in general, and lightly touch'd some Points,

* MODERN PLEAS for Schism and Infidelity, Review'd.

Points, occasionally mention'd by your Lordship: I proceed now to wait on your Lordship, in what you have been pleas'd to offer, with Regard to such Exercises of the Christian Priesthood, as are more particularly mention'd by your Lordship, as follows :

“ AUTHORITYATIVE Benediction is another of the
 “ Terms of Art, much used by our Protestant Adver-
 “ saries, and others, who follow them too closely ; in
 “ which they claim a Right to the Clergy, in one cer-
 “ tain regular Succession, of Blessing the People. If they
 “ mean no more by this, than that being appointed, in
 “ an orderly manner, to officiate in the Church, it is
 “ part of their Office to declare, out of God's Word,
 “ upon what Terms he will give his Blessings to Christi-
 “ ans ; or to express their own hearty Wishes and Pray-
 “ ers, for the People's obtaining that Blessing, this might
 “ be understood : But to claim a Right to stand in God's
 “ Stead, in such Sense, that they, with all their Infirmi-
 “ ties, Prejudices, and Mistakes, about them, can abso-
 “ lutely and certainly Bless some, or with-hold a Blessing
 “ from others ; and that God Almighty hath obliged him-
 “ self to Bless, or not to Bless, with their Voice alone :
 “ This is the highest Absurdity, as it's putting a Power,
 “ which nothing but Infallibility can support, into the
 “ Hands of Men, remaining Weak and Fallible ; and,
 “ as I think, the highest Blasphemy, as it supposes Al-
 “ mighty God to place a Set of Men above himself ; and
 “ to put out of his own Hands, the Disposal of his own
 “ Blessings and Curses.

“ THE same you will find a sufficient Reply to their
 “ presumptuous Claim, to an authoritative Absolution.
 “ An infallible Absolution cannot belong to fallible Man :
 “ But no Absolution can be authoritative, which is not
 “ certainly to be depended upon : nor certainly to be
 “ depended upon, which is not infallible : Therefore no
 “ authoritative Absolution, properly so call'd, can be-
 “ long to any Men living, &c.” Page 91, 92.

I WOULD, My Lord, be the last that should quarrel
 about Words ; but to find that Authority invested in the
Christian Priesthood by Divine Institution, of *Blessing*,
 and

and *Absolving* the People, mention'd by your Lordship, with such an Air of Contempt and Disdain and presented to the World in no better Epithets, than if it were only a Juggle, and Legerdemain, gives me, I confess, abundance of Concern. *Authoritative Benediction*, a Term of Art! Sure, *My Lord*, 'tis more, 'tis the Doctrine of our Church, 'tis the Doctrine of the Scriptures. When your Lordship is pleased to explain your self against this authoritative Blessing, you seem to me to allow all that is contended for by the Non-Jurors, or any Body else, that know what they mean themselves: If, for the Words *appointed in an orderly Manner*, you mean appointed by Divine Institution (I am jealous, *My Lord*, lest you should mean only appointed by the State) I say, if your Lordship here agrees, the Christian Priesthood is appointed by God, immediately for that Purpose; and that God Almighty (as our Church expresses it) has given *Power, and Commandment, to his Ministers to declare, and pronounce to his People, being Penitent, Absolution, Remission, Benediction, or the like*; it is all as ever I heard any intelligent Person contend for: And as for what you afterwards encounter, of claiming a *Right* by Virtue of this *Power*, so given by Divine Institution, *absolutely* to Bless, Absolve or the like; this I own is a Notion so *absurd* and *blasphemous*, that it seems to me, not only out of the Power of Man, but (with Reverence I speak it) God himself: For, *My Lord*, God Almighty himself is bound by his own eternal *Veracity* and *Justice*, neither to *Bless* nor *Forgive* an *impenitent Sinner*, having sworn in his *Wrath*, that *such shall never enter into his Rest*, and as fully assur'd us, the *Soul that thus sins, shall die*; because *he is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, and is Just in all his Ways, and Righteous in all his Doings*: A Pretence therefore to an absolute Power of Blessing, or Forgiving, is what can be pretended by none; the immediate Blessing of God himself, being conditional. In this Charge therefore I can't but persuade my self, you mistake your Protestant Adversaries; having never found any so mad, and senseless, as to imagine any such Power in the Priesthood, no not of the *Roman Catholicks* themselves.

YOUR Lordship, in the next Paragraph, varies your Term, from *Absolute* to *Infallible*; and as if you spoke
your

your Sense in what you charg'd before, say, *An infallible Absolution cannot belong to fallible Men*; and taking here the Word *Infallible*, and *Absolute*; in the Paragraph before, to be in your Lordship's Intention, Synonymous, your Lordship's Meaning, I humbly conceive to be this. That as the Priesthood is exercis'd by Men; Men of Weakness, Passion, Prejudice, &c. Their Blessings, Absolutions, &c. cannot be said to be either Authoritative or Infallible.

AND this, *My Lord*, I should very readily admit, were the *Mission*, or *Divine Authority*, by which they act as imperfect as themselves: But, *My Lord*, it seems very strange, you should distinguish no better in this Case, when an Article of our Church has made it so very plain; That your Lordship must needs remember, tells us in the Case of even wicked and immoral Ministers, That, *Forasmuch as they act not in their own Names, but that of Christ*, the Efficacy of what they do, does not at all turn on their moral Character; how Good, or how Bad; but only on the Power given them by him, in whose Name they act: So that, tho' it is very readily admitted, the Clergy are Men of the same Weakness and Infirmities with others, it does not therefore follow, their Office should be tainted with the same Imperfections.

BUT, perhaps we shall better understand each other, if we state it in a Logical View. Your Lordship forms your Argument thus, viz.

AN infallible Absolution cannot belong to fallible Men. But no Absolution can be Authoritative, which is not certainly to be depended upon; nor certainly to be depended upon, which is not infallible.

THEREFORE no authoritative Absolution, properly so call'd, can belong to any Man living.

I LEAVE the Learned to quarrel about *Mode* and *Figure*: However, *My Lord*, I must own my self under some Difficulty in your first Proposition (for I durst not call it your Major, lest I should be ask'd after the Minor) say, I am in a Doubt, concerning the Truth of your
first

first Proposition: For if your Lordship means an infallible Absolution cannot come from, or be pronounc'd by Man; I deny it flatly: Because, if God vouchsafes to give such a Power to Man; so far as that Power extends, it must be Infallible: And when God Almighty expressly orders a Minister to say, *Thy Sins are forgiven*, I am as infallibly sure they are so, as if I heard a Voice my self from Heaven.

AND this, *My Lord*, is the Case in dispute, God Almighty has given such a Power to the Christian Priesthood; and has promis'd to ratify what is done by them of this Kind, by Virtue of their Mission; and tho' they have themselves, a thousand personal Failings; yet, on our performing the Conditions of the Gospel, your Lordship has mention'd, we may as certainly depend on the Truth, and Authority of what is so pronounc'd by them, as if we heard it from the Mouth of God himself.

YOUR Lordship, I own, uses the Words; *an infallible Absolution cannot belong to fallible Man*; but as, if you mean any thing, this must mean not to be infallibly pronounc'd by a Man, I think I should trifle with your Lordship by a Criticism of that Nature. The Absolution, no doubt, belongs to God; tho' by Virtue of his Command pronounc'd by Man: And in this Sense only can it be either Infallible or Authoritative. All, therefore contended for, is this, That a Regular and Christian Priesthood is *impower'd*, and *commission'd* by God, Authoritatively to Bless, and Absolve us of our Sin, when we have made good those Conditions which make it consistent with the Nature and Attributes of God, that we should be so Bless'd, even by he himself in Person. And this, upon due Consideration, will appear, I humbly conceive, consistent both with sound Reason, and positive Scripture.

It will not sure be thought unreasonable, that God should lodge such a Power with his Creatures, since such is the infinite Glory and Majesty of his Nature, that it is not proper for him personally to converse with them himself; And, as their honest Humility, will lead them to doubt of his Will in this Particular, it cannot sure be
F esteem,

esteem'd disagreeable to his Goodness, to give us the utmost authentick Satisfaction in a Point of this vast Importance. Such a Notion therefore, of his deputing some of his Creatures, authoritatively to pronounce, or declare his Will, cannot be thought irrational, or in the least inconsistent, with our natural and just Ideas of the Goodness, and condescension of the Deity. To say it is absurd, or blasphemous, to suppose that God should so do, is to charge those stated Methods he has taken for us to know his Will, with being so; which surely must be the very Nature and Essence of that Charge, such rashly urge against it. God Almighty certainly, as well as the Monarchs of this World, may chuse who he will to Act in his Name: And if he has thought fit to appoint one Set of Men, more peculiarly, so to act, it cannot with any Reason, be said to be either absurd, or blasphemous to assert it. Such Persons, *My Lord*, so empower'd by God himself, may act as 'twere in his stead; and when they do so, 'tis not in the least a Robbing God of his Prerogative, or any thing like it; but only acting by Virtue of such Power, as he is pleas'd to delegate to them: And when on Examination, the Scripture itself positively declares, that thus he has done in Fact, it commences not only Rational, but what we ought indispensibly to believe; which we are next to consider.

All Power, says our Blessed Lord, *is given to me both in Heaven and Earth; as the Father hath sent me, so send I you.* These, and such like, are frequently the Expressions of the Gospel; and tho' it might be necessary to expatiate in the Proof to others, to you, *My Lord*, I must be persuaded 'tis needless. The Particulars of this Power would be too tedious here to enumerate; but as those of Benediction, and Absolution, are what we are immediately concern'd in, some Enquiry of that Nature cannot be unuseful. In these therefore 'tis expressly declar'd from the Mouth of the Blessed Jesus himself. That *whatsoever his Ministers should bind on Earth, it was bound in Heaven*; and, *whatsoever they should loose on Earth, it was loosed in Heaven.* Mart. xviii. 18. 'Tis not in the least, *My Lord*, inferr'd from hence, that any thing that Persons never so regularly enter'd into the Christian Ministry, shall do, (out of the Limits of their Commission,

or contrary to the Terms of the Gospel) is so; but whatsoever they shall do of this Nature, by Virtue of their Office, as Ministers of Christ Jesus, is confirm'd in Heaven; so that it is not the *Abuse*, but proper *Use* of the Sacerdotal Power, is here contended for. In the regular Exercises of this, no doubt their Actions are binding and infallible, however it may grate with our *Modern Protestants Ears*. An elaborate Proof of this, would soon swell these Papers beyond their present Design; and your Lordship having offer'd something particularly to the Text refer'd too, makes it our next Business more immediately to attend to that. Your Lordship is pleas'd to say,

“ IF they amuse you with that Power, which our Saviour lodg'd with his Apostles, *whosoever Sins you remit, they are remitted to them; and whosoever Sin you retain they are retained*, or the like: You may answer securely, that it is impossible for you to depend upon this Right in them as any thing certain, till they prove to you, that every Thing spoken to the Apostles, belongs to Ministers in all Ages of the Church. This is impossible for them to prove: And therefore it is impossible to draw a certain Conclusion from it. *Page 93.*

BUT why Amuse, *My Lord*? The Non-Jurors are not the only Persons that urge this Text for the Power of the Keys. This way of Expression, I confess, of late is very common, and suits very well with our Modern Notions of Protestantism; but I should therefore have thought your Lordship above it, and I must own, I had much rather see such Levities come from the Genius of a Mugg-House, or the Pen of a News-Writer, than such as your Lordship's. The Power, *My Lord*, of Blessing, and absolving being lodg'd in the Priesthood, was never thought a Term of Art till such refin'd Gentlemen, as the Author of the Rights of the Christian Church, enlighten'd the World; and the Text before us has ever been deem'd so plenary a Proof of such a Power, that it is urg'd by Divines of all sorts for that purpose. We need not Ransack the Shelves of the *Vatican* for Authorities in this Point, for Commentators of all sorts are too full to be evaded. Nor that it is insisted that every thing that was promis'd

mis'd to the Apostles reaches all their Successors in the Christian Ministry ; it is very readily confes'd some Parts of their Power were entirely miraculous and extraordinary, conferr'd on them, the better to fit them for the particular Exigences of the Church ; but the Power of *Remitting*, and *Retaining*, is not so esteem'd, as I see by any of the Commentators. This is by them all mention'd, as that ordinary, and stat'd Power, which was promis'd to the Church, *till the End of the World* ; and therefore, though it cannot in the least be pretended that every thing spoken to the Apostles, belongs to Ministers in all Ages ; yet the Power here contended is allow'd so to be by all ; consequently the Conclusion of such a Power, as the Text mentions, belonging to all of the Regular Priesthood is very certain, as certain that all the Promises of God, are *Yea*, and *Amen*.

DOCTOR *Hammond* Comments thus on the Text ;
 “ Which ye therefore to whom I now speak, the design'd Rulers of the Church, and your Successors the Bishops, are in this Case to proceed, to use the Keys given to you as the Stewards of the House, for rejecting of such, and I assure you, whomsoever you shall thus cast out of the Church, &c.

BISHOP *Hall* thus, “ Whosoever Sins you do remit, whether by way of publick Doctrine, or particular Application of your Apostolick Sentence, they are remitted to them in Heaven ; and whose Sins soever ye retain, whether by general Doctrine, or by special Censure, they are retain'd by God, and shall be fearfully imputed to the Offenders. These Acts of yours both ways (as also of your true and lawful Successors) shall be accordingly ratified in Heaven.

DOCTOR *Whitby* is so far from contending with your Lordship, this Power to be peculiar to the Apostles, that in his Annotations he contends against the Papists, that the Power of thus binding and loosing, might be applied to every private Christian in the Case of forgiving Offences ; however, he fully grants it in the Priesthood in all Ages of the Church, and backs it with the Authority of the Fathers, at the same time he was disputing against the false

false Inferences made by the Church of *Rome* from this Text, to support their pretended Infallibility.

WHAT is said of this Nature by *Grotius*, *Pool*, and the other *Latin* Commentators, I leave the Men of Leisure to examine. All the World must allow what is here offer'd is sufficient to ballance against a bare positive Assertion; and that therefore when the stated and regular Power of the Priesthood is urg'd from the particular force of the Text, it ought not to be treated as a bare Amusement, but attended to with that becoming Awe and Reverence, the Importance of the Point requires.

YOUR Lordship proceeds, "As for the Nature of the thing, it is much more probable that these Words refer'd to something Extraordinary and Supernatural in the Apostles, for the Propagation of the Gospel, at first, than to any thing, in the ordinary settled Condition of the Church. And though it be suppos'd that we cannot fix the true plain meaning of this Text, yet, (which is the next best Thing, and of equal Importance, with respect to the present Controversy) we can certainly fix what is not the meaning of it. For whatsoever Contradicts the natural Notions of God, and the Design, and Tenour of the Gospel, cannot be the true Meaning of any Passage in that Gospel. But to make the Absolutions of weak, fallible Men, so necessary, or so valid, that God will not pardon without them, and that all are pardoned who have them pronounc'd over them, is to contradict those Notions as well as the plain Tenour of the Gospel, which expressly declareth Men to be in God's Favour upon their forsaking their Sins, and as expressly continues to Almighty God the disposal of his own Favours, upon his own Terms, which was always his Prerogative. Therefore, it cannot be the true Intent of this Passage now before us, to give any * [*such*] Power to Men.

How

* The Word [*such*] here being inadvertently omitted, is mightily remark'd on by a Gentleman who has engag'd in his Lordship's Defence, but of what Consequence it is, the Reader will easily judge.

How extraordinary, and supernatural, such a Power is, the Nature of the Thing, and the Sense of Commentators will best determine; and your Lordship having offer'd nothing of the latter, our next business is to consider the former. The uncertainty, *My Lord*, you seem to be in, to fix the Meaning of the Text, can be advanc'd, I think, into no Argument. Our natural Notions of a God do not in the least contradict what he has reveal'd of his Will, and the Tenour of the Gospel clearly informs us, he has lodg'd such a Power in the Hands of Men. Men weak and fallible, as your Lordship calls them. He has not, indeed, given them this Power, without our performing those Conditions your Lordship mentions, neither will he grant his Favours or Absolutions himself, (without such Substitutes) except those Conditions are made good. No body disputes either this, or that God Almighty has not the disposal of his own Favours; but the Question is, Whether in Fact he does not bestow his Favours on our performing such Conditions, and empower his Ministers fully, and authoritatively to assure us of this? Our Church, I am sure, is undeniably plain in this Particular, telling us expressly, he has given us such Power, and *Commandment to his Ministers*; and therefore if her Authority be of force, your Lordship's Conclusion must be false; and it is evident, God Almighty has given such Power to Men.

BUT further your Lordship says. " If we look back
 " upon our Saviour himself, we shall find, that when
 " he declares in the Gospel, that the *Son of Man had*
 " *Power upon Earth to forgive Sins*, even he himself, ei-
 " ther meant by it the Power of a miraculous releasing
 " the Man from his Affliction (which was look'd upon
 " the Punishment of Sin) or, if it related to another,
 " and more spiritual Sense of the Words, the Power of
 " declaring only that the Man's Sins were forgiven by
 " God. By his supernatural Knowledge (not by that
 " which belong'd to him as a mere Man) he knew that
 " God was going to shew Mercy to the Man. But his
 " way of Expression was, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*.
 " This was plainly to acknowledge and keep up that true
 " Notion that *God alone forgiveth Sins*. And our Sa-
 " viour

" vious knowing the Case of the Man there spoken to,
 " assured him of God's forgiveness. *His Sins were for-*
 " *given by God.* And the Son of Man's Power to forgive
 " *Sins on Earth*, was plainly to declare this to him, of
 " whom he certainly, and infallibly knew it to be true.
 " And so to any other. This arose, you see, wholly
 " from his infallible Knowledge of the Will of God,
 " with respect to that particular Person, and could have
 " had no Place in our Lord himself, had he been a mere
 " Man, without an infallible Knowledge in himself, or
 " Communication of Knowledge from God, concerning
 " his Will and Favour to this Man, or to other Men.
 " Pag, 96.

THAT our Blessed Lord was invested in his humane
 Nature with a Power to *forgive Sins*, or as your Lord-
 ship expresses it, *declare them forgiven*, is abundantly
 plain from innumerable Texts; but that this Power was
 only owing to his Supernatural Knowledge, is not any
 where declar'd. That he had it by Virtue of his Com-
 mission, or Messiahship, is indeed often, and very fully
 express'd; *All Power*, he expressly says, *was given him*
both in Heaven and Earth, and so given him that he
 could communicate it to others; *As the Father sent me,*
so send I you. And the Reason our Blessed Lord gives
 for this fullness of Power, is because his *Father loved*
him, he had given all Power into his Hands. So that the
 Power of our Blessed Lord is no where laid at all, on
 his particular and personal Perfections, but as *it pleas'd*
the Father, that in him should all Fullness dwell, and there-
 fore gave him full Authority to *forgive Sins on Earth.* A
 Power of this Nature was what he always insisted on,
 and therefore when he was cavill'd at by the Jews, for
 saying to a sick Man, *thy Sins are forgiven Thee*; his
 Answer was (in the Case of the Paralitick) *That you*
may see the Son of Man hath Power on Earth to forgive
Sins, Arise, take up thy Bed and walk; where the Mi-
 racle perform'd is only made the Evidence, or Proof, of
 his having such a Commission from his Father.

NOT but that I am free to own the absoluteness of
 our Lord's Manner of Expression, in his particular Ap-
 plications, might be owing to the Fullness of the God-
 head

head that dwelt bodily in him, by which he knew the secrets Springs and Dispositions of the Heart ; but this is certain, as he was a *mere Man* such Power of authoritatively forgiving Sins, on the Conditions of Faith and Repentance, might be lodg'd in him, by Virtue only of a Divine Commission ; and though we should suppose him never so weak and fallible, yet, as far as he acts by Virtue of that Commission, what he does must be Authoritative, Valid, and infallible.

YOUR Lordship mentioning so often, that it is *God alone that forgiveth Sins*, seems to me to suppose it asserted by us, that the Priest forgiveth the Sin himself, exclusive of God ; whereas, *My Lord*, I never heard any contend for more than this, That God Almighty would most certainly Pardon, such as were orally pronounc'd absolv'd, by a Regular Priest, by Virtue of his Mission. It is, *My Lord*, a Doctrine not so very New, to be branded as absurd, and blasphemous, and every thing else that your Lordship's Wit, and fertile Imagination can load it with: Had not the Ministers of God ever such a Power, in all Ages of the Jewish and Christian Church? Did not *Jonas* by Virtue of such a Commission pronounce positively, that in forty Days *Nineveh* should be destroy'd, and though their after Repentance prevented the impending Judgment, was the defect of his Sentence owing to the Weakness and Infirmary of the Man? How were the Denunciations, or Absolutions, of any of the Prophets valid, but only as they were commissioned by God so to speak and act? And this is all I am persuaded is meant by any that use those Terms of Art, as your Lordship calls them, of Authoritative, Benediction, Absolution, &c. That God Almighty ratifies and confirms, what they do of this kind on Earth, in Heaven, and has more immediately appointed them for that purpose than other Men.

BUT your Lordship will have it necessary, that the Man that does this must be infallible. *To talk of such a Power without Infallibility, is Nonsense, and to pretend to such Infallibility, is Blasphemy.* This is the Dilemma your Lordship proposes, and therefore concerning this Power allow'd by your self to be in the Apostles, though

though not their Successors in the Christian Ministry you say :

“ THE Apostles likewise might possibly understand the Power of remitting, and retaining Sins, to be the same with that Power of *laying their Hands on the Sick*, to which a miraculous Recovery was particularly promis’d by Christ. Or, supposing that they apply’d it to the certain Absolution of particular Persons (of which we read nothing, as I know of) it is plain that they could do it on no other Bottom but this, That God’s Will and good Pleasure about such particular Persons was infallibly communicated to them ; and that they declar’d his Will about those particular Persons. Not that themselves absolv’d any Men, or hinder’d them from being absolv’d by God ; no, that God was obliged to tie and untie, to bind, and to loose the Guilt of Men, according to their Declarations considered as their own Deceptions, and their own Determinations : But that upon any such Occasion, they, declar’d a Matter of Fact, infallibly made known to them by God ; either that he was ready to bestow his Mercy upon such particular Persons, or that he was Angry with them. This can only be the meaning of the Passage, supposing it to relate to Absolution. It must arise from extraordinary Communications of Knowledge from God ; and consequently cannot relate in the same Sense, to any Set of Men in the Ordinary State of the Church, void of such Communications of infallible Knowledge, as could be even in the Apostles, the only Foundation of any supposed authoritative Absolution”. Page 95, 96.

BUT why, *My Lord*, all this Harangue about Infallibility ? Was not *Ehaz* himself a *Man subject to like Passions as we are* ? And who was there among all the Apostles, not subject to humane Frailty ? Yet these, by your Lordships own Suffrage, were empower’d authoritatively to Bless, and Absolve. Let this (as your Lordship contends) be never so peculiar to them still it proves, that such a Power, may, if God Almighty pleases, be given to fallible Men ; and when it is suppos’d that they are commission’d by him thus to do, all their Weakness,

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and Infirmary, does not at all affect their Authority, and the Reason of this, is, because that is Divine, tho' they Humane. Your Lordship, indeed, insists, such a Power must arise from extraordinary, and particular Communications; But let the Communications be what they will, *Ordinary*, or *Extraordinary*, still it turns upon them; and when they are once made, the Authority of the Act is not to be disputed. Tho' the best of Men are fallible; yet the Institutions of Heaven are perfect: And when we are assured, *Thus saith the Lord*, 'tis always true, 'tis always authentick, let the Speaker be who he will. The Weakness and Fallibility of the Men, invested with the Christian Priesthood, can therefore be no Argument against either the Authority, or Validity of their Administrations; and 'tis very much to be wonder'd your Lordship would labour a Point, so very foreign, and wide from the Purpose.

Y E T far am I from denying, that there were some Instances of Power lodg'd in the Apostles, that were not continu'd in the After-Ages of the Church, such as the *Miraculous Power of healing Diseases, the Gift of Tongues, Prophecy*, and the like: But the Power of *Benediction* and *Absolution*, seem so necessary to the continual Consolation, and Support of the Church in all Ages of it, that one would think the very Nature of the Thing should suggest, these were *Gifts* Christ left with her, *even to the End of the World*. He must be a great Stranger to that *Peace of God, which passes all Understanding*, that hath not sometime or other, felt his Heart enlarg'd, by a lively Faith, at the Publick *Benedictions* of our Assemblies; and when these, or some other more private Absolutions, are apply'd to an honest, tho' almost despairing Convict, that secret spring of Joy, that immediately flows in such a Breast, speaks, *My Lord*, the *Authority* of a *Regular Priesthood*, beyond the Reach of Words. The Nature of my Profession does not lead me to these Observations; but, *my Lord*, I have had the Honour to hear such Accounts of this kind, from some of your sacred Function, as leave me no Room to doubt. There is nothing I am naturally more jealous of, than *Enthusiasm*: Religion, I have thought (ever since I have been possess'd with the least Builddines of Reflection) never takes up its Abodes, in the confus'd Labyrinths of a tick-ly

ly Imagination ; I have always believ'd (and the more I have examin'd, still the more I have believ'd) the Christian Religion, *a reasonable Service* ; yet, *my Lord*, in sight of all the personal Failing (I wish from my Soul, I could not say, mean, base Actions!) of some of the Clergy, I have always thought it no inconsiderable Part of this Religion, to reverence their Order : And this I have done on this single Principle ; because I firmly believe their Ministry, is by the real, and undoubted Appointment of God, made a means towards the eternal Salvation of my Soul.

BUT another Medium your Lordship advances, to prove, there is no such Thing as Authoritative Benediction, or Absolution, is, because no Priest can absolve a Man, but on the Terms of the Gospel. This *My Lord*, I should have taken for Inadvertency, had I not found it so often inculcated.

THAT the Benediction, or Absolution of any Priest, takes its Validity wholly from the Terms of the Gospel, I never found any so mad as to deny. Your Lordship does indeed, seem to speak of such People ; but where, and who they are, I never yet could learn. A Priest having Divine Authority to act within his Commission, has none at all, when he exceeds it ; and therefore if any of them should pretend to bless, or absolve on others Terms, than what the Gospel exhibits, he not only acts without Authority, but wickedly ; and don't use, but abuse his Office. But then it seems very strange to me that your Lordship should insist, that in order to an Absolution's being truly authoritative, it must be absolute, and without any Conditions : For *My Lord*, cannot Authority as well be determin'd by Conditions, as without them ? Is not a Pardon granted by a Prince, as authoritative ; authoritative, I say, not absolute, when it is granted on Conditions, as when there are none ; Without this be granted, no Pardon of a Sinner could be allow'd authoritative : Not by the Ministers of the Gospel, because such a Pardon is not in their Commission : Not by the Apostles ; because they were bound to deliver the Obdurate, and Incurable, *over to Satan* : No ! not by God himself ; because he is bound by his Veracity and Justice,

Justice, to punish such an Offender. Let therefore, the Absolution pronounc'd by a Priest, be never so conditional, still 'tis authoritative as on such Terms 'tis ratify'd by Heaven; and that what the regular Priesthood, thus limited, does pronounce, is so; Scripture, Reason, and all Commentators confirm. Their authoritative Benediction, and Remission, are not barely Terms of Art, and more Amusements, but real; and Divinely instituted Parts of the Christian Priesthood, and to the End of the World.

AND this, after this long Contest, your Lordship seems to me, at last to grant. "All (says your Lordship) that it (that is the Text of Remitting and Retaining) can possibly convey to any, who succeed the Apostles in their Spiritual Office, supposing it to relate to this Subject, is a Right to do their Duty; to declare Persons absolv'd from their Sins by God, so far, and no farther than as they come up to those Conditions, upon which our Lord himself fix'd their Acquittance, or Justification. This is all a fallible Man, in the highest Office in the World, is capable of.

AND 'tis, *My Lord*, all that is contended for by any I know, and is as much as an infallible Man could do, could we suppose such a Thing: For if they have a Right, they have an Authority to do this; without Right, and Authority should prove at last to mean two Things: And if this Right be Divine, then they have a Divine Right, Authority which you please to do so; consequently authoritative Benediction, and Absolution, prove at last, by your Lordship's own Concessions, not to be such extravagant Notions, as your Lordship has represented them.

BUT it fares with this Doctrine, as it did with some of the Martyrs of our holy Religion, whose Innocence and Inoffensiveness, took off the Fierceness of the very Brutes; therefore were they dress'd in the Skins of wild Beasts, the more effectually to tempt the Hounds to worry them. The native Beauty, and Innocence of Truth is such, that were it not misrepresented, if it were

were not embrac'd, yet it would be treated with outward Respect. The Rage of its Enemies find it difficult openly to hunt it down; therefore it must be disguis'd with some of the Deformities of Falshood, that it may appear frightful, and monstrous to the Beholder.

PERMIT me, *My Lord*, once more to transcribe your Lordship, and I have done. After therefore, your Lordship has concluded God to be Just, and Good; the Gospel a plain Declaration of his Will; that he cannot put into the Hands of weak, fallible Men, Privileges, and Powers of authoritative Benediction, &c. That these are things he keeps in his own Hands, and do not depend on Regularities, Niceties, impossible, or improbable, &c. Your Lordship adds, "This will lead you (as it ought all of us) not to be afraid of the Terrors of Men, or the vain Words of regular and uninterrupted Successions; Authoritative Benediction, Excommunications, or Absolutions, Nullity, or Validity of God's Ordinances to the People, upon the Account of Niceties, and Trifles, or any other the like Dreams of those who have seperated themselves, or those who follow them in these Doctrines. And a little after, I am sure that it is upright, and honest to speak this plainly. And again, The Papists may excommunicate the Protestant Non-jurors. The Non-jurors may excommunicate the High-Church-Men, as well as all other *British* Protestants, who Pray for King GEORGE. These again may excommunicate, unchurch, unchristian, those, whose Church-Government, or Worship, differ from their own. And these again may exercise the same Spiritual Discipline (the same, *My Lord*, very kind indeed,) wherever their Terrors can extend themselves. They may thus scatter Damnation about; playing, one would think like the Man in the Proverbs, with Fire-brands and Death; and saying, Are we not in Sport? And they may every one flatter themselves, that this Power of the Keys, shuts out from the Catholick Church here, and the Kingdom of Heaven hereafter: But it is in Truth, only from themselves, that they can excommunicate. And this is very often their own Crime, and their own Loss". Page 98. 100.

INDEED,

INDEED, *My Lord*, this is making Dispatch, and telling us at once, all Ecclesiastical Power, is a sort of Theological Bugbear. For since the Pretences of the most sacrilegious Usurpers, that ever appear'd in the Christian Church (I mean those of our Dissenters) is blended with the regular Priesthood of the Church of *England*, it's evident, your Lordship's Argument is no longer to be consider'd against the Abuse, but the Use of such a Power in the general. Really, *My Lord*, you may mention the Mirth of the Fool in the Proverbs; but whether this Latitude (for so I must call it) doth not give Encouragement to licentious Tongues, and Pens, to make a Jest of all Religion, will, I hope, be seriously consider'd before too late. Far be it from me, to contend for the many idle Abuses of the Power of the Keys, in the Church of *Rome*; But when the Sentence of Excommunication, is pronounc'd by a regular Priesthood, by Virtue of their Mission; I must declare it my Opinion, That next to eternal Damnation, nothing can be more dreadful, without Repentance, and being reconciled to the Church. To *despise*, and *laugh* at such a Sentence, is directly to *despise*, and banter *Christ himself*; and one, that thus contemn'd the Authority of the Church, was not only to be treated as a *Heathen*, and a *Publican*, but was actually deliver'd over, by an Apostle to *Satan*, *that he might learn not to blaspheme*.

THE Sense of the ancient Fathers, in this Particular, is recent in all Church-History; it cannot here be unuseful, to lay before the Reader, some of the Accountts of the Learned *Cave*, on the Sentence of Excommunication, as practis'd by the Primitive Church.

“ THIS Way of Punishing (says he) by Excommunication, was not Originally Instituted by our Lord,
 “ or his Apostles; but had been anciently practis'd, both
 “ among *Jews*, and *Gentiles*. 'Twas commonly by the
 “ *Druides*, (as *Cæsar*, who liv'd among them, inform
 “ us) who, when any of the People became irregular,
 “ or disorderly, presently *suspended* them from their Sa-
 “ crifices. And the Persons, who were thus suspended,
 “ were acounted in the Number of the most *impious*
 “ and

and *excrable* Persons. All Men stood off from them,
 shunn'd their Company and Converse, as an *Infection*
 and a *Plague*. They had no Benefit of *Law*, or *Honour*,
 or *Respect* shewn unto them; and, of all the
Punishments, this they accounted most *extreme* and *severe*.
 So far, he giving an Account of this Discipline
 amongst the ancient *Gauls*. In the *Jewish Church*,
 nothing was more familiar; their three famous *Degrees*
 of *Excommunication*, *Niddui*, *Cherem*, *Shammatha*,
 are so commonly known, that it were impertinent
 to insist on them. From the Usage of the *Jewish*,
 it was, amongst other Rites, adopted into the
Christian Church, practis'd by the *Apostles*, and the
 Churches founded by them, (whereof we have Instances
 in the *New Testament*) but brought to greater
Perfection in succeeding Times. 'Twas variously
 express'd by their ancient Writers, tho' much to the
 same Purpose. Such Persons are said *Abstineri*, to be
 kept back, a Word much us'd by *Cyprian*, and the
Synod of Illiberis, ἀποκείδαι, to be *separated*, or to be
 separated from the Body of Christ, as *St. Augustine*
 often expresses it; ἐκκοπείδαι τῆς κοινῆς πύλας, to be
 wholly cut off from the Communion, as 'tis in the
Apostolick Canons. Sometimes ἐκκλησία ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας,
 as the *Laodicean Synod* calls it, to be *thrown out* of
 the Church, to be *anathematized*, and without the
 Communion, or *Pale of the Church*, as the Fathers of
 the Council of *Grangra* have it.

THIS Suspension, and Penance that accompany'd it,
 was greater, or less; longer, or shorter, according to
 the Nature of the Crime; sometimes two, three, ten,
 fifteen, twenty, or thirty *Years*, and sometimes for
 the whole Life; nay, in some Cases, it was not taken
 off at Death, but Persons were left to the Judgment
 of God, without any *Testimony* of their Reconciliation
 to the Church: Tho' herein the Severity was mitigated,
 not only by private Bishops, but by the great
 Council of *Nice*; which Ordain'd, That penitent
 Persons should not be deny'd Communion at the
 Hour of Death. If the Persons offending, happen'd
 to be in *Orders*, he forfeited his Ministry; and tho'
 upon Repentance, he was restor'd to Communion;

“ yet it was only as a *Lay Person*, never recovering the
 “ Honour, and Dignity of his Office. Thus *Cornelius*,
 “ Bishop of *Rome*, giving *Fabius*, of *Antioch*, an Ac-
 “ count of the Clancular and Schismatical Ordination
 “ of *Novatian*, tells him, That one of the Bishops that
 “ Ordain'd him return'd after to the Church with Tears,
 “ bewailing of his Offence, whom at the Instance of the
 “ People, he had receiv'd into *Lay-Communion*. The
 “ same *Cyprian* writing about this very Case to *Tro-*
 “ *phimus*, (who was either the very Bishop mention'd
 “ by *Cornelius*, or one of his Collegues) that returned
 “ to the Church with great Demonstrations of Repen-
 “ tance, he tells us, He was admitted, but no otherwise
 “ than in the Capacity of a Lay-Man. And speaking
 “ elsewhere of *Basilides* Repentance, he tells us, He
 “ had no Thoughts of retaining his *Bishoprick*, making
 “ account he was very well dealt with, if upon his Re-
 “ pentance he might Communicate as a *Lay*ck, and be
 “ received amongst the Number of the *Faithful*. This
 “ *St. Basil* tells us, Was an ancient *Canon*, and Practice
 “ of the Church, and accordingly ordains, That a *Dea-*
 “ *con* guilty of Fornication should be depofed from the
 “ Office, and being thrust down in the Rank of the
 “ *Laitie*, should in that Quality be admitted to Com-
 “ munion.

TIS not, *My Lord*, that I think any thing of this
 Nature, can be new to you; that I have so largely tran-
 scribed this excellent Author; but as these Papers are to
 bear a publick, as well as your private Viewt I can't
 but think it must be at once, both useful and delightful
 to the Common Reader. Permit me, therefore, to add
 yet further his Account of the Manner of the Primitive
 Church receiving again excommunicate Persons; on their
 Repentance.

“ DURING the space of *Penance* (says he) they appear'd
 “ in all the Formalities of Sorrow and Mourning, in a
 “ sordid and squallid Habit, with a sad Countenance,
 “ and a Head hung down, with *Tears* in their Eyes,
 “ standing without at the *Church Doors*, (for they were
 “ not suffer'd to enter in) falling down upon their Knees
 “ to the Ministers, as they went in, and begging the
 “ Prayers

" Prayers of all good Christians for themselves, with all
 " the Expressions and Demonstrations of a sorrowful and
 " dejected Mind; reckoning the *lower* they lay in Re-
 " pentance, the *higher* it would exalt them; the more
 " sordid they appear'd, the more they should be cleansed
 " and purify'd; they less they spare themselves, the more
 " God would spare them. At these times also they made
 " open Confession of their Faults, this being accounted
 " the very Spring of Repentance, and without which
 " they concluded it could not be real. *Out of Confession*
 " (says *Tertullian*) *is born Repentance, and by Repen-*
 " *tance God is pacify'd.* And therefore without this, nei-
 " ther Riches nor Honour, would procure any Admission
 " into the Church. Thus *Eusebius* reports, That when
 " *Philippus*, the Emperor, would have gone in with the
 " rest of the Christians, on *Easter-Eve*, to have partaked
 " of the Prayers of the Church; the Bishop of the Place
 " would by no means suffer it, unless he made *Confession*
 " of his Sins, and pass'd through the Order of the *Pe-*
 " *nitents*, being guilty of great and enormous Sins;
 " which 'tis said, he very willingly submitted to, testi-
 " fying by his Actions, his real and religious Fear of the
 " Divine Majesty. This Story, though as to the main
 " of it, it might be true, yet as fasten'd on *Philip*, the
 " Emperor, I have formerly shew'd it to be false; and
 " that 'tis rather meant of one *Philippus*, who was
 " Governor of *Egypt*, and profess'd himself a *Christian*:
 " But, however this was, 'tis certain that a Person as
 " great as he, *Theodosius the Great*, for his bloody and
 " barbarous Slaughter of the *Thesalonians*, was by St.
 " *Ambrose*, Bishop of *Milan*, suspended, brought to
 " publick *Confession*, and forced to undergo a very se-
 " vere Course of Penance for eight Months together;
 " when after great Demonstrations of a hearty Sorrow
 " and sincere Repentance, not more rigidly impos'd,
 " than readily and willingly received by him, after his
 " usual Protections in the Church, (as if unworthy
 " either

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either

Primitive Christianity. Part III. Chap. V. Page 450, 451, 452.

453, 454, 455.

N. B. I must desire the Gentleman who expects the Councils shou'd be quoted in this Edition, to go for them to Father CAYE's Book it self, (as he scornfully calls that GREAT and Venerable MAN,) where he may see them at large.

" either to Stand or Kneel) crying out in the Words of
 " *David, My Soul cleaveth unto the Dust, quicken thou*
 " *me according to thy Word,* after having oft torn his
 " Hair, beat his Forehead, watered his Cheeks with his
 " Tears, and humbly begged Peace and Pardon, he was
 " absolved, and restored to Communion with the Church;
 " of which Passage, they who would know more, may
 " find the Story largely related by *Theodoret*.

I AM very sensible how well soever, this may be
 known by your Lordship, and entertain'd with the ut-
 most Deference by such as have any Notion of the Puri-
 ty of the Primitive Church, yet such is the sordid Igno-
 rance of our Modern Sectarists, and the oversiz'd Under-
 standings of some of our Moderate Church-Men, that
 every thing of this Nature must pass for Popery; as if
 (as the Learned *Stillingsfleet* observes) though several Hu-
 mane Politicks, have continued their Original Constitu-
 tion many hundred Years, that of the Church should be
 wholly lost in two or three Centuries, and that so insen-
 sibly, that none should complain of it. But, however,
 'tis to be hop'd that some will be induced to think the
 Censures of the Church, were not made so light of in
 those early Ages of the Church, and that there was no-
 thing except Eternal Damnation, the Primitive Christi-
 ans more dreaded than the Sentence of Excommunica-
 tion.

NOR does the Church happily establish'd among us,
 make her Censures of this Nature, less weighty and im-
 portant. 'Twould too much Swell the Bulk of these Pa-
 pers, to lay before you the Language of her Canons;
 and we need not go further, than one of her Articles,
 to be inform'd, That excommunicate Persons, are to be
 treated as Publicans and Heathens; and are prosecuted
 with a sort of Rigour, even after Death, being deny'd
 Christian Burial.

IN short, where-ever Christianity has gain'd any
 Footing in the World, such Privileges of the Church,
 your Lordship is pleas'd to make a Jest of, have always
 struk the Minds of all her Members with Awe and Re-
 verence; and I am very sorry any thing from your Lord-
 ship

ship should Clash with so Universal a Sentiment. The Abuse of these Powers, or rather the pretending these Powers in such Instances, in which they are not, cannot here be concern'd, nor ought not to be made an Argument against the regular and commission'd Use of them. Most certainly such Power in the general, is lodg'd in the Church, and the Eternal Veracity of God is engag'd to uphold, and confirm it to the End of the World. The Pretension the Ministers of the Gospel have to such a Power, is not (as your Lordship expresses it in your Preface) *a substituting themselves in Christ's stead*; but the immediate and free Act of our Lord Jesus himself, who made them his Substitutes here on Earth, and has promis'd whatever they do on Earth by Virtue of their Mission, should be *ratified in Heaven*; so that, *My Lord*, all the Authoritative Instances of this Nature, ought not I humbly conceive, to be call'd *Man's Judgment*, but the *Judgment of God* pronounc'd by *Man*.

THE Result then of the whole is, That as God is True, and Just, and Good; so he has demonstrated these his endearing Attributes to the World, by the particular Revelation of his Will in the Holy Scriptures. By these, he has not left us to the uncertain Conclusions of our own weak Reason, but plainly chalk'd out to us each particular of our Duty. Some Things he has made so, by his own positive Institution, such as *Baptism*, the *Lord's Supper*, &c. Others he has left to be determin'd by his *Ministers* and *Stewards*, with the strictest Charge to us to *obey them*, in all proper Instances of their Power, because they are appointed by him *to watch for our Souls*. This Authority thus lodg'd in the Ministers of the Church, is so strongly inculcated by our Blessed Lord, that he peremptorily pronounces they that *despise it, despise him*; and as he that *receives a Prophet in the Name of a Prophet, should have a Prophet's Reward*, so he asserts every Injury done to the *least of these his Brethren*, directly done unto himself, and should accordingly be accounted for at the Day of Judgment. Nor was this Regard to them to be *Temporary*, or confin'd only to the Apostles, but to continue to the *End of the World*; and though they were in all Ages not only *to wrestle against Flesh and Blood*, but *against Principalities, against Powers,*

ers, and the Rulers of the Darknes of this World, yet they were promised that the Gates of Hell should never prevail against them; and in all these Encounters they would come off more than Conquerors, through Christ that strengthen'd them.

THESE, My Lord, were the Promises, and these the Foundation on which the Christian, that Royal Priesthood was built, and the Truth and Stability of them, the World has had above Seventeen hundred Years Experience of. When was there a Time since our Saviour left the Earth, that this Order was Extinct in? And when was there a Time in which it was not revered, and thought to be of Divine Institution by wise, as well as weak Men? These were, My Lord, the Sentiments of all Christians, before the Corruptions of the Church of Rome were ever heard of in the World. Those that could dare to die, dare did I say, submit to die, yet would not give up the Christian Priesthood to the severest Edicts of the Emperors. The Power that gave them a Mission, they thought Prior, in all its Obligations to any Power on Earth, and so far as they acted consistent therewith, no Prohibition they thought could dissolve their Obligations. They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for this, and found themselves, at no Dilemma, when the Competition was between God and Man. Not that they were so well Lectur'd concerning the Good of Society, to think themselves engaged to oppose by Arms, their Lawful Governors on this Account, and the after Experience of the Church proves them right in their Notion; but their Principle, at once led them to Preach and Die for the Christian Religion. As their Bishops did not enjoy the Protection, and Blandishments of the Civil Power, so they were very far from acknowledging, they derived their Office solely from it. They had learned from an Apostle to Glory in nothing so much as the Cross of their Saviour, and knew no Self-Preservation, like that of saving in their Souls. To suffer was a Lesson they were very well instructed in, and though they were not taught by Experience, yet they were fully persuaded, the Blood of the Martyrs would prove the Seed of the Church. God Almighty they believ'd not only to be infinitely Good and Just, but also infinitely Wise: and there-

therefore tho' their Zeal for the Good of his Church, was not at all weak and languishing, yet they always thought him the properest Judge of the *Means* to preserve it. They were fully convinced, he that could *Grasp the Globe in the Palm of his Hand*, and Frown the most *exalted Buble of Dust and Ashes* into his Primitive Nothing, needed not their Assistance, and therefore they kept carefully within the *Mounds* of their Duty, and left the Event to his Providence. This made them tenaciously assert the Divine Authority of the Civil Power, though all its whole force seem'd bent against them; and though, as *Tertullian boasts the greatness of their Numbers, and their fearlessness of Death might have made them formidable*; yet they always prov'd they had no Weapons allow'd by their Religion against that, but *Prayers and Tears*. They could, they did therefore, bravely Die for exercising their Priestly Office; but they durst not decline, though prohibited by all the Power on Earth, which surely must prove them great Strangers, to what your Lordship so earnestly contends for in the first *Branch* of your Discourse, *Lay-Deprivation*.

NOR were they less zealous for the *particular Exercises*, than the *general Office* of the *Priesthood*. *Authoritative Benediction, Absolution, &c.* were with them neither *Terms of Art*, nor *Amusements*. They look'd on them as a Power devolv'd by Christ on the Church for all Ages; and though they were free to own these inestimable Privileges, and dreadful Sentences were convey'd to them through, or by the Tongues of weak and fallible Men, yet they consider'd their Divine Energy and Force, came from him, in whose Name they act. *Paul*, they were sensible *might plant*, and *Apollos might water*, but it was only *God that gave the Increase*: This therefore, though it made them look at the Original Author, withal made them have the highest Value for the Instrument, and to esteem the *despising* of the Ministers of Christ in the proper Exercise of their Office, of the same Nature and Malignity, as if they *despised* Christ himself in Person.

I MUST add further, *My Lord*, there is nothing peculiar to the Church of *England*, that need make us ashamed

sham'd to own this Doctrine. The Authority of her Mission, both in the general and particular Exercises of it, is declared to be of the same Divine Institution: Whatever your Lordship may at present think, She is not ashamed to assert, even in her Daily and Publick Service, God Almighty had given such Power and Authority to her Ministers, as is here contended. Nor does such an Authority at all Clash with any of the *Attributes* of God, but very well Comport, with that incomprehensible Love, that is throughout the Sacred Writings, said to be between Christ and his Church.

UPON the whole, and to take it one general View, whether we consider the *express Decisions of the Scriptures*; the *Sense of the Fathers*, that of all the *Commentators*, or the *Publick*, and most *Authentick Voice of the Church*, with the *Perplexity and Uncertainty* of what your Lordship has presented: The two last *Branches* of your Lordship's Discourse, must appear, at least to carry some Difficulty in them, of that Nature, as is not at present solvable to that Conscience, and common Sense of the Christian Laity, to which your Lordship is pleas'd to appeal.

THUS have I fully laid before you, *My Lord*, such Reasons, as make me so unhappy at present, to differ from your Lordship; and as the particular Encouragement you are pleas'd to give to the *Laity*, will, I hope, excuse this Trouble; so the vast Importance (as they at present appear to me) of the Matters in Controversy between us, made such an Enquiry entirely necessary. For *me, My Lord*, I think, a Matter of the highest Consequence to the Honour of Christianity in general, to consider whether its Priesthood be of Divine or Humane Institution. When it is consider'd it has always been, the Boast of the most Idolatrous, and Pagan Priests, that they had their Mission, immediately from the Gods they Worship'd; it must certainly depreiate the Christian Priesthood below all others, to suppose that alone deriv'd from the Civil Power. 'Tis true, we are commanded to submit to every Ordinance of Man; but no one is more sensible than your Lordship, how very averse the great Law of Nature is to this Precept, tho' the Divine Authority

rity of the Writer, has given it an undeniable *Sanction* from Heaven. Wicked, and profligate Men, have in all Ages, been ready enough to say these Things; but it is exceeding Pitty, they should have any Encouragement from such as you. Tho' the Christian Priesthood would lose very little Ground, by the most prying Examination of the best of the Laity; yet the Light, and Superficial, are always, your Lordship must needs know, *Wiser than their Teachers*; and did not the better Sense, and Enquiries, of others, positively pronounce them Divinely Commission'd, we should find them treated (as the Apostle complains in his Time) *as the Filth and Offscouring of the World!*

AT once, with Pleasure, and Horror, I speak it; in this Age, so sunk is the Reputation of the Gown, so far is it from the wonted Respect and Veneration, was formerly shewn it, that it has been often mention'd to me, with a sort of melancholly Complement, that any Thing in Favour of Religion, from even such mean Pens as mine, is better receiv'd by far, than the most elaborate Work of a Clergy-Man. 'Tis with great Joy, I embrace the Opportunity of Baffling so unreasonable, so monstrous a Prejudice; and that I can, in the meanest Degree, convince such People, of the Possibility of being in Earnest for Religion, without (as they term it) Writing for my Trade: But, what can we say, *My Lord*, when the Question is put thus home to us, *Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit Sacrilege?*

WE are told by St. *Saul*, That some *Preach'd Christ through Envy*; yet, still as Christ was preach'd at all, the Holy Man rejoic'd. This may not be our Case at present, admit it be for *Gain*; yet let us appear, at least as much in Earnest for the *Goddess* as the *Shrines*. IF the Priesthood be at last a *Trade*; let it, however, hold fast its *Charter*, and since the World have for the most Part, believ'd that *Charter Originally to be Divine*, let the Notion be still kept up; and only the Wits, and Merry Andrews of the Age, blab out the Cheat. Such a Notion to be sure can do no Hurt, our most refin'd Politicians allow, Priests are the finest Fellows in the World to keep the Mob in awe, and have made it one Objecti-

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on against our *Charity-Schools*, that the Children are made as wise as themselves.

FAR be it from me, *My Lord*, to charge you with designedly encouraging these Consequences: but, I wonder your Lordship should be unmindful, there are too many that will. It cannot sure have escap'd your Notice, what a remarkable Malice is hourly display'd against the Clergy in general; and sure, your Lordship cannot have forgot how easy it was to prove *Naboth a Blasphemer*, when *Ahab had a mind to his Vine-yard*.

THE old Stuff of *Protestantism*, and *Zeal against Popery*, may serve well enough to keep up the *Dinn of a Mug-House*, or the *Huzza of a Bonfire*; but the *Man of Parts and Distinction*, is for *Damning the Parsons* in general; and all the World knows his Motto is, *Priests of all Religions are the same*.

BELIEVE me, *My Lord*, 'tis with exceeding Sorrow I observe, any thing your Lordship has said, should give Birth to such melancholly Reflections; and, had not your Lordship's too great Plainness in these Particulars, been impossible to be pass'd over, gladly would I have declin'd this ungrateful Task: But to find the Office of the Priesthood, the most exalted and Divine Priesthood, that God Almighty ever bless'd the World with, contended by your Lordship, only to be a Creature of the State; and that those who are invested with the highest Parts in it, should be represented as acknowledging, nay, swearing to this themselves, the good old Principles I have learn'd from my honest Fore-Fathers; the Doctrines of the Church, in which I've been brought up; and the Doctrines of the Gospel too, would not bear the Thoughts of such a Notion. This sure, *My Lord*, is the worst Pick'd Time that could be chose, to broach a Principle so odious; God knows, we are far enough now, from being *Priest-ridden*.

NOR does the Vindication of any of our particular *Laws*, at all render such a Use of the Office of the Priesthood, as is entirely Divine, and commission'd by Christ, at all necessary to be voided; for, however the

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Letter of the *Law* may be express'd, it seems more than probable, the Sense of our *Legislators* was thereby, only to take their Civil *License*, and *Protection* away, so as it should be *Penal* for them so to exercise their *Function*, as if they had them: And this the present *Practise* against the *Non-jurors*, seems to prove; for, tho' by their *Non-jurancy*, they are render'd incapable to exercise their Ministerial Function, in any *Licensed Assemblies*; yet I have not heard, it hath been deem'd Criminal (in the Eye of the *Law* that deprives them, or takes away its own *License* or *Protection*,) when such *Exercises* have been perform'd by them in their own *Private Assemblies*. I say, I have not heard of any one that has been prosecuted for bare *Non-jurancy*, nor their *Administrations*, as Ministers of the Gospel, in the least disputed by any, at their *Private Assemblies*; and this inclines me to think the *Law* is not levell'd against their *Function* in general, but only such *Exercises* of it, as come under its more immediate *License* and *Protection*. Consequently, what your Lordship so earnestly contends for, in the Civil Power, by Way of *Commutation*; or, as your Lordship terms it, *Choosing a less instead of a greater Punishment*, is entirely needless in the Application, and is no more the genuine, and original Sense of the *Law*, than the *Doctrine*, either of the Church, or Holy Scriptures.

THIS, *My Lord*, I mention, not that I could determine my Opinion in a Point of this Nature, by all the *Laws* on Earth; but to shew that it is at least doubtful, whether you have not carry'd the Point of *Lay-Deprivation*, further a great deal, than the *Law* of the Land.

THERE is one Thing more, the Consequence of *Lay-Deprivation*, which I find stated by your Lordship. "Doth not this *Doctrine* allow a *Nero*, or a *Julian*, "utterly to destroy the Church, and thereby to frustrate "our Saviour's Promise: Page 57.

YOUR Lordship's Answer to this, is, That such a Power of *Deprivation* in the Civil Power, would not be so destructive to the Church, as *Banishing*, *Imprisoning*, and *Executing*.

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BUT this, *My Lord*, can by no means be admitted; because, in all the Instances mention'd by your Lordship, as allow'd the *Function* may be transmitted to *Others*, tho' the *Man* is sacrific'd; but upon the Supposition of a total *Deprivation*, *Validly arising* from an *Edict* of *Law* of such an *Emperor*, the *Function* itself must of course be exting'd, and so I think the Church itself; a Ministry, being *given*, if we believe the Apostle, *for the edifying the Body of Christ*.

YOUR Lordship, I am sensible, complains mightily under the Weight of this Consequence, and supposes it giving mighty Advantage to the *Deists*; to mention any thing of this Nature; but then, *My Lord*, let it be consider'd from whence it arises; and whether he that asserts the Validity of *Lay-Deprivation*, does not put such a Power into the Hands of any *Prince*, who has a Mind to exercise it? To tell us Christ's Promise will hold good, notwithstanding all possible Attempts of this Nature; and that when a Prince exercises such a Jurisdiction, he *mistakes* his Power, is, I think, in other Words, to own such a *Power*, does not belong to him, and then all are agreed, and these Difficulties vanish in a Moment.

CONSEQUENCES, as they are generally manag'd, is a Way of arguing, I am far from insisting on; and therefore I have presented such as occur'd to my mean Observation, thus at the End of this Cursory Work. Mistake of the *Premises* from whence they are drawn, or false, or ignorant *Deductions* from them, often render them exceeding fallacious. Not but something of this Nature is useful, sometimes to fright People to their Duty; and those who are not to be moved by any thing that is generous, and manly, are this Way persuaded to think it their Interest to be honest. But you, *My Lord*, need not be told the Consequences of your Notions, who so directly, and openly avow them in their Particulars. *Lay-Deprivation* alone, is not to be contended for by your Lordship, but the *Orders* of the Christian Priesthood in general, must be call'd a *Nicety*; *Authoritative Benediction*, and *Absolution*, only *Terms of Art*; the *Scripture* that proves this Power, an *Amusement*; and the

the *Dreadful Sentence of Excommunication*, only a *Dream*, and a *Trifle*.

GOOD God ! What, *My Lord*, could tempt you to these strange Expressions ? When *Julius Cesar* receiv'd the fatal Stab from *Brutus*, he seem'd to have forgot all his other Wounds, and mournfully cry'd out, *And THOU Brutus !*

NEVER was there a People yet upon Earth, so barbarous, so lost to every Sense of God, and Goodness, but were struck with some Awe, at the *blissings*, or *Curses* of their Priests ; the Savage Nature of an antient *Gaul*, would yet start at the Sentence of *Excommunication* ; and shall a *Briton* ! a Church of *England* Man ! a *Christian* ! make it his *Pastime* ! The Soul thus sunk in dire Progressive Ill, must quite stupid view the Dark Abyss, only tremble, when she's plung'd in Flames !

I CANNOT forbear some Warmth, when I find Things of the most sacred, and awful Nature in the World, thus made a Jest of. I am sorry this should be in an Address of this Kind ; but certainly there is a Time, when we ought to be in Earnest. I know not how it may be entertain'd ; but I can with the utmost Sincerity profess, I am not byas'd in the least, either by Personal, or Party Regards. Should any thing I have said, be unbecoming your Lordship's Sacred Character, and that Reverence, I own, I ought to pay it, as it was entirely undesigned, so I shall immediately own it a Fault ; and with abundance of Readiness, more far than I was to be Guilty, acknowledge, and re-cant it : But if the Nature of the Argument only should bear hard, if I find not Candour to excuse, I shall very little concern my self at that. As what I have here presented, flows from the sincere Dictates of my Conscience, so I must avow (tho' this might not be expected from me) the little sordid Malice of a poultry Pen, shall only move Disdain. I am very sensible what Arts are us'd to intimidate, and daunt an honest Mind, but I fear not what my worst Enemies can say : I cannot imagine, either *Religion*, or *Loyalty*, to lie in Names ; nor can I see any necessary Consequence, between being a *Lover* of the *Church* that nurs'd me, and an *Enemy* to
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the *Government*. They that fill our Streets with Mobs and Outrage, let their Cry be what it will, *High-Church*, or *King GEORGE for ever* ! I can't but think the Scandal and Disgrace of both. Now the Convulsions of the State seem in some measure appeas'd, 'tis to be hop'd all wise, and honest Men, will at least concur in this: Nor ought the most specious Pretences, to draw them from it. Let those, who pretend to be for the Church, shew it, by strictly corresponding with its Peaceable Doctrines; and sure it may be expected from Gentlemen of *Loyalty*, that they will not disturb the publick Peace.

THESE Things may seem very foreign, to be mention'd to you, *My Lord*, but it can't be improper in any thing at this Time, that bears a publick View, to exhort People no longer to be cheated with Words. How much such Arts have contributed to our past, and present Distractions, they who have us'd them, on all Sides, would do well seriously to consider. However laudable the End propos'd may be, we may rest assur'd, we ought not to play the Devil for God's sake; or, in the better Language of an Apostle, *Do Evil, that Good may come of it*. 'Tis very strange so many People should know no Mean, between leaping Hedge and Ditch, and being ty'd Neck and Heels; and 'tis stranger yet, that Gentleman of better Sense and Distinction, should encourage such a Folly. A Man, indeed, would not very readily Expositulate with the *Wind*, or Syllogize with a tempestuous *Sea*, but when he considers himself embark'd in the *Vessel* that must bear their Shocks, he will sure omit no Endeavour to keep it from Sinking. To see a Parcel of idle vagrant Wretches on one side, ready to swear all Oaths, but that of the *Abjuration*, bauling for the Church; and another call'd his Opposite, who would sell his Saviour for less than *Judas* did, bellowing against *Pottery*; To see such monstrous *Madness of the People* as this, and any ways Joyn and Abet their Wickedness, is the present Shame of the Age, and will be the Reproach of Posterity. The Church owes no thanks to such as these, they are her Scandals, *pierce her through with many Sorrows*: and the Name of a *Protestant*, is made so ridiculous by this means, that I could almost wish the very Name were lost. Is it not a horrid thing; that such a Set of Miscreants, as deny even

even visible Christianity, should skreen themselves under the Name of our *Brother Protestants*! Happy were it for us, were this Evil only kept up by Mobbs! No, we have set Cabals, stated Societies of this Brood of Monsters, which though as different in Particulars, as the Confus'd Languages of *Eabel*, yet must all be known by the Name of Protestants. Known (oh Righteous God!) not only among themselves, in the Secret Synagogues of their own Conventions, 'tis not only the Language of their own Gang, but we find them complemented with it by others, and the Man that honestly *Protests* against their Abominations, is void of Temper! void of Moderation!

BUT is there nothing that is wicked and execrable, at last, to be abhorr'd but Popery? Can we detest the *Parent Viper*, and yet Caress her *Progeny*? The Church of *Rome* to this Nation has been a true *Viper*, which when (as the Naturalists inform us) it has discharg'd her Brood, finding them afterwards grow Troublesome, gorging them down again into her Belly, She finds them eating up her very Bowels.

Unhappy Isle, are such as these your Protestants! Will no good Angel point you out your Friends! Look back to distant times, and View our blest Reformers. Could they want Zeal against Popery? View the Stakes and Flames, they honestly expir'd in. They taught not their Religion by embattel'd Armies, but bravely argu'd first, and then contented died. These were your Protestants; Men who were in earnest for Religion, and made the Name in After-ages venerable. Superstition and Idolatry, 'tis true they hated, and had they liv'd in these Times, they would have been equally Zealous against the Rudeness and Indecency of Phanaticism. *Protestantism* was not then barely a Name to swell the Throats of a Mob, but was meant only as an honest Declaration against the Corruptions of the Times. Let us for Shame therefore cease the Word, without we keep its original Meaning, and shew our just Aversion to *Popery*, rather by the Strength of our Arguments, than the Noise of our Voices. 'Tis not to be conceived the Pleasure the Church of *Rome* takes, to hear some of our Modern *Protestants* declaim against it. She has long practis'd this Art with

Success,

Success, to present those as most inclin'd to her, who have argu'd best against her; and depend on it, though her Arguments do, her Malice will never fail. Look over the Writings of the Church of *England*, and then judge who is the most formidable Enemy to Popery; What that is worth looking at, ever came from our other Sets of Protestants? Look back but to the Reign they so much talk of. I mean that of King *James* the Second, and what did they say then against Popery? They fatally forc'd that unhappy Prince to beg his Bread in Popish Countries (*cursed be their Wrath, for it was Cruel!*) where he imbib'd their Superstitions, but what was offer'd by any, except our own Divines, to take away his fatal Prejudices? No, they confirm'd his Error, presented him such a frightful Scene of *Protestantism*, as made him like the barbarously treated *Pagans* by the *Spaniards*, prefer any Hell, to the Heaven, that must have their Company. His subtle Priests about him soon, very easily perswaded him against such new *Light* and *Conscience*, which had almost expounded away not only every Article of the Creed, but even the first Principles of Morality. Unhappy Prince! young was he when he lost his martyr'd Father's Instructions, and Nature almost forc'd him to abhor that Name, which to him seem'd still, with Triumph wading in his Father's Blood. But we can sure distinguish better, let us therefore disclaim such Wretches any longer, as *Protestants*, or at least, if they will use the Name, because we will be distinguish'd from them, let ours be that of *Christians*.

W H o they are, their strange and damnable Principles do most surely speak. *By their Fruits you shall know them*, and by their Malice, perhaps, may feel them. I speak not against Persons but Things, and leave your own Observation to discover where the Poison lies.

PARDON, me, *My Lord*, if our Modern Methods of Blending all Opinions, under the Common Name of *Protestant*; makes me seem to forget who these Papers were first address'd to; the Wound that Smarts most, naturally engages our wish for a Cure. Some may call this *Coalition*, *Comprehension*, *Moderation*, or what they will, to me it appears downright confounding the Distinctions of Good and Evil, and putting *Evil* for *Sweet*, and *Sweet* for

for Bitter. Our Excellent Church, to me, has always seem'd like her great King, and Lord, *crucified between two Thieves*, and I wish I could say, either of them were like to prove a Penitent. The misfortunes of Education and Ignorance, no Man is willing to consider with more Candor than I, but certainly they are most highly to blame, who *sew Pillows* under such Peoples Arms, and indulge their Follies. Is not all Error displeasing to God, why then must not our *Protestant Brethren*, as is the Fashion to call them, have the Truth as fully and learnedly laid before them, as the *Romans*? But to see every ridiculous Fellow inveighing against the one, and no notice, nay, the Truth minc'd and sham'd for fear of displeasing the other; This is such a Partiality, let it be complain'd on by High-Church, as some love to call them, or who they will, that I hope will be consider'd by all Men of Sense, before too late.

Is there no way to avoid the force of Popery, but by encouraging such Principles as are enough to sink the World to Atheism? Let any impartial Men consider, who our Excellent Church is at present most impudently attack'd by Papists, or Atheists, (for several of our Modern Dealers in *New Light* seem to me to be little better) and then determine where most immediately lies our Danger. I scorn, *My Lord*, to calumniate particular Persons, under the Covert of general Expressions, and as the Nature of Disputes of this sort, do in a great measure take their Malignity from the Intention of the Heart, I desire only God Almighty might determine, the Guilt of particular Persons. However, that the Truth should not be given up, I think all will allow; and this, *My Lord*, was it induc'd me to give you this Trouble, who am with the profoundest Reverence, to the Sacred Character, your Lordship bears in the Church, and not the least Personal Picque,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's

Most Humble, and

Most Obedient Servant,

Joseph Smith.

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